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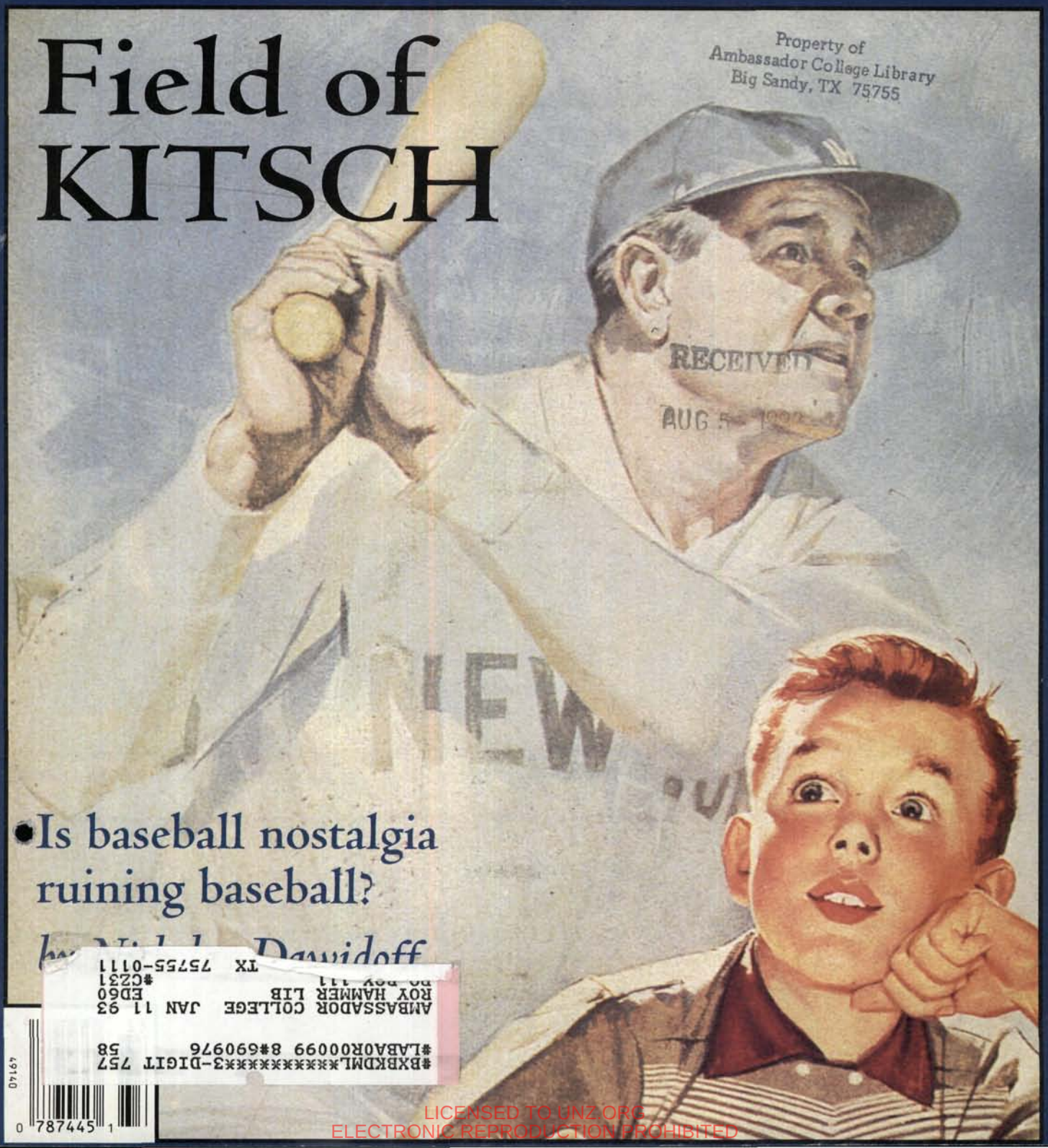

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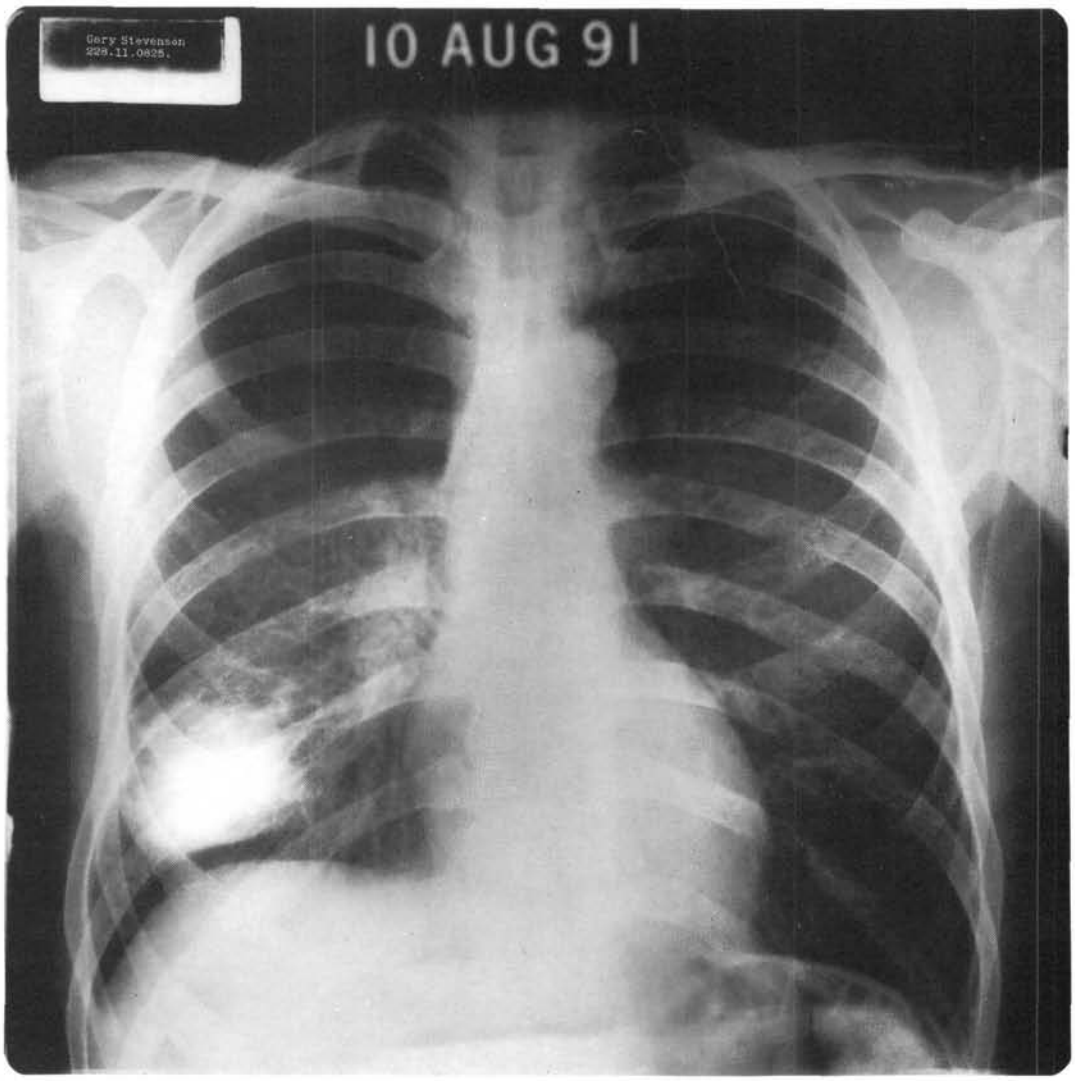

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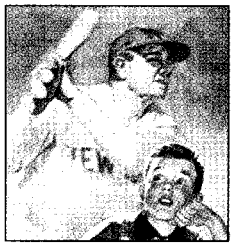

Cover: From *The Babe: A Life in Pictures* by Lawrence S. Ritter and Mark Rucker (Ticknor & Fields, 1988). Article on page 22.

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CORRESPONDENCE

The Gay Science

To the editors:

As a university representative present at the first public meeting of gay students at my alma mater (Stanford) in the early 1970s, I read Martha Nussbaum's classical defense of gay studies ("The Softness of Reason," July 13 & 20) with my head bobbing up and down in agreement. But by the end of it I found myself hankering for a more rambunctious attack on the foot-draggers of academe. Then it dawned on me: the perfect complement to a Socratic defense would be a Nietzschean one. Who better for the task than this philosopher who said a "gay kind of seriousness and ... *wisdom full of pranks*" constitute "the best state of the soul of man"? Nietzsche came to be highly suspicious of Socrates, "this most brilliant of self-outwitters," who employed "reason" to flee from or falsify "the testimony of the senses." Nietzsche detested the way the "tyrant" reason creates illusions that conceal or deny the physiological and spiritual realities of individual identity. He ridiculed the self-outwitting, self-repressive prevarication of Plato's "asserting that there would be no Platonic philosophy if there were not such beautiful youths in Athens." He "outed" Plato and Socrates ("this mocking and enamored monster ... of Athens").

The first advantage of a Nietzschean defense, then, is that it cuts the sweet talk. A second is that Nietzsche gets us beyond Nussbaum's two secondary theorems—that it is a pity to refuse knowledge, that we must become "citizens of the entire world"—and down to the real argument for gay studies. Namely, that education must, before all else, encourage the student to discover and take pleasure in his or her real self: in Nietzsche's simple words, to find "joy in life and in one's own self." In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche wrote that "the degree and kind of a person's sexuality reach up into the ultimate pinnacle of his spirit." Insofar as gay studies would help a large minority of college students to remove obstacles to reaching and inhabiting this pinnacle, who could object?

A third advantage is that Nietzsche heaps such eviscerating sarcasm on the main opponents of gay studies: "the prigs, the priests, the virtuous." There is a fine heat—reminiscent of Mencken—in his attack upon moralists who go about saying, "Change yourself!" Nietzsche's main attack upon the anti-gay moralists aims at their *negativism*. They are the true perverts. Nussbaum praises Socrates' openness to new knowledge, but I think Nietzsche—who urged "saying Yes to life even in its strangest and hardest problems"—is even more all-embracing: "We immoralists have ... made room in our hearts for every kind of understanding, comprehending, and *approving*. We do not easily negate; we make it a point of honor to be *affirmers*."

The final advantage of a Nietzschean defense is that much of Nietzsche's delightfully bitchy and prank-filled rhetoric easily translates (without too grievous a loss of poetry) into a rhetoric of Gay Pride and of derision of the Closet. Nowhere does Nietzsche better capture the "ugliness"—the humane and cultural costs—of the Closet than in this passage from a work titled—but of course!—*The Gay Science*: "One thing is needful: that a human being attain his satisfaction with himself—whether it be by this or by that poetry and art; only then is a human being at all tolerable to behold." Programs designed to encourage gay and lesbian students to discover the "art" and "poetry" of self-satisfaction would, I should think, be impossible to object to. Acknowledge the existence of fairies, and the grove of academe will become decidedly less gloomy.

GARY SCHMIDGALL
New York, New York

To the editors:

I am unconvinced by Martha Nussbaum's arguments for gay studies. The main problem is that she never distinguishes between reasons for studying various aspects of homosexuality and reasons for founding programs of gay studies in modern universities. For any legitimate or even widely acknowledged phenomenon X, it is hard to imagine reasons for not "studying" X. Consequently, for the most part, Nussbaum's essay is gratuitous, except against real neanderthals. But reasons for why there should be programs for the Study of X—for X-studies—at modern universities are a different matter.

Aristophanes is irrelevant here, surely. Such a question would involve issues of how effective and desirable such interdisciplinary programs could reasonably be expected to be at increasing and improving (not merely nominally gathering together) worthwhile research on homosexuality and its history. The only argument Nussbaum gives in this vicinity is an anecdote about how homosexuality is not now adequately covered in some departments at one prestigious university. The fine earlier work by Nussbaum and Dover on Greek homosexuality, or by Foucault, and the mostly feeble work we see coming from institutionalized gay studies would actually seem to undermine the case for gay studies. The contrast between Nussbaum's *The Fragility of Goodness* and John Winkler's *The Constraints of Desire*, whose introduction begins by drooling over Greek bodies, is almost too painful to contemplate. I would conjecture that such a puerile opening to a book is only possible because of the recent invention of gay studies and its attendant audience. Thus the promotion of Causes and Missions launched from the parochial and naively politicized base of Gay Studies may actually hinder gay studies.

RANDALL R. DIPERT
Fredonia, New York

To the editors:

Gay and Lesbian Studies? Sure, why not? And while we're at it, how about Monogamy Studies, Polygamy Studies, Celibacy Studies, and S&M Studies? Each has its own history, famous practitioners, literature, and biological issues; each is accepted in some places, rejected in others.

There is perhaps—perhaps—an argument to be made for "Human Sexuality Studies" programs, which would examine a number of previously overlooked issues related to sex in a historical, cultural, literary, biological, etc., context. But to separate out homosexuality for special attention trivializes the educational process. It is an attempt to create a shared identity for a disparate group that is defined only by its sexual behavior.

JONATHAN D. MUEHL
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Bald eagles

To the editors:

I feel your readers were given a dose of misinformation in "On Wings of Bull" (by Sidney Blumenthal, July 13 & 20). The details of the rescue of two EDS employees in the late '70s are best known by those who were there—and who support the depiction outlined in Ken Follett's book *On Wings of Eagles*.

Blumenthal, through selectively quoting Henry Precht, John Stempel, and Bahman Fouzoni (who is mistakenly identified as once working for EDS), implies that EDS obtained its contracts with Iran in the '70s through "corrupt" dealings. In fact, when EDS did not receive payment for many of the services it provided to the Iranian government, the company was forced to bring suit against Iran to collect the money it was owed, approximately $20 million. The result of that suit: EDS was awarded $20 million by the U.S. Federal District Court. The court also addressed the Iranian government's claim that EDS's con-

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tract was improperly obtained by making this judgment: "Neither EDS nor anyone on its behalf procured the contract unlawfully. No evidence showed bribery of any official nor did the evidence suggest the existence of fraud or public corruption in the procurement of the contract." The court continued: "EDS was awarded the contract after an open process and in preference to proposals of several other companies. The evidence did not show that EDS enjoyed any improper advantage relative to the award."

As an aside, Precht and Stempel are both cited in the story as debunking the "popular" version of the Iranian rescue and Follett's book. At the end of *On Wings of Eagles*, Follett acknowledges several people for their assistance in making the book accurate and for reviewing the manuscript. Both Precht and Stempel are recognized on that page.

ANTHONY GOOD
Director, Public Relations, EDS
Dallas, Texas

Sidney Blumenthal replies:

EDS received its contract in Iran through its hand-picked agent, Abdol Fath Mahvi, so renowned for his corruption that he was eventually blacklisted from arms dealing by the Shah, for whom he had served as pimp and bagman. In the EDS lawsuit in U.S. Federal District Court, the mullahs refused to supply any documents that would establish contrary claims. They simply declined to participate in any non-Islamic proceeding. Bahman Fouzoni, in fact, did not work for EDS, but as an official for the Ministry of Social Security, working with EDS. Henry Precht, formerly in charge of the State Department's Iran desk, and John Stempel, the former deputy political officer in the U.S. Embassy in Tehran, are indeed cited in Ken Follett's acknowledgments. But neither, in their interviews with me, supported the representation of "the rescue" in *On Wings of Eagles*.

Merry pop-ins

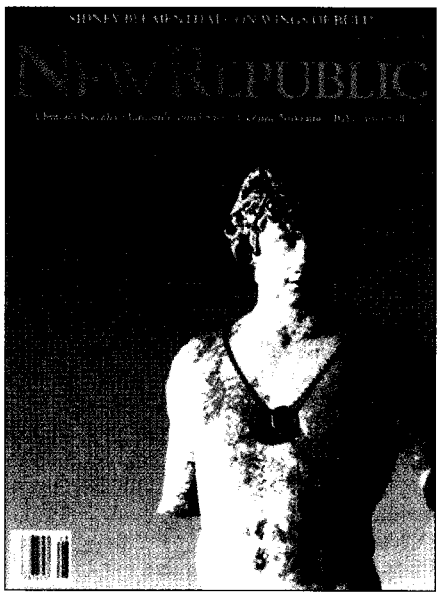
To the editors:

As a working mother (is there any other kind?), I was deeply offended by Julie Salamon's piece on baby sitters ("Sitting Pretty," July 13 & 20). For one, its patronizing tone, dizzying array of vague half-truths, and glib, arrogant assumptions reminded me of a remark made by the Lamaze instructor my husband and I had before our first child was born. "What you want in a caregiver," she told her captive yuppie audience, "is someone just like you, only without the benefits of your background and superior education."

Then there are the appalling stereotypes Salamon invokes, like the cold, unfeeling "chic" mother who's so busy pursuing her own life that she neglects her child, or the mother who belatedly discovers she doesn't like small children all that much and then goes out and hires a surrogate to do her job.

But one resounding truth does emerge from Salamon's piece: the business of taking care of children obviously remains women's work. To judge from Salamon's anecdotes, it's never dawned on anyone in her circle that a task as important as finding a suitable baby sitter for the child of two working parents might necessitate *some* involvement, however slight, on the part of the child's father.

LORRAINE GLENNON
Brooklyn, New York



To the editors:

It's time to set the record straight on Mary Poppins. The Julie Andrews character is really a rather sinister nanny who lies to the children in her care (denying what they had all just experienced—the chalk-picture episode—and threatening to call the police on them if they continue talking about it), and who in the end, abandons the children without a farewell, only to complain (to her umbrella) that not one of the Banks's thanked her or said goodbye.

I would think a movie critic should know these things.

MARIE D'AMOUR BAKER
San Antonio, Texas

Truth in labeling

To the editors:

Jacob Weisberg did himself and the Jewish community a grave disservice in his Washington Diarist ("The Usual Suspects," July 13 & 20). Jews have enough enemies in this world so that labeling someone's statements as anti-Semitic should only be done with great care and only when clearly appropriate.

The quote from Dan Quayle's speech that he claims has anti-Semitic undertones is: "The cultural elite in Hollywood and elsewhere may have a lot of money. They have a lot of influence." I don't see the word "Jew" anywhere in that sentence. Is Weisberg identifying Hollywood with Jews? The last person to do that publicly was Leonard Jeffries. Is Weisberg equating Jews with money and influence? *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* did the same. If Weisberg needs to deconstruct Quayle's speeches with the help of mentors of this type to reach his conclusion, he is of no help to the Jewish community.

RABBI BARRY FREUNDEL
Washington, D.C.

Settled scores

To the editors:

It is puzzling why Gordon S. Wood, in his review of Garry Wills's *Lincoln at Gettysburg* ("Permanent Address," July 13 & 20), fails to mention the one conservative who has treated Lincoln's thinking vis-à-vis the Declaration of Independence very much along lines Wood himself favors. Harry V. Jaffa, in his *Equality and Liberty* (1965) and *Crisis of the House Divided* (1973), argues that Lincoln accurately took the Declaration to be the philosophical justification of the thesis of the Gettysburg Address.

Shouldn't credit be given to whom it is due, even if the person is a conservative?

TIBOR R. MACHAN
Auburn, Alabama

Term's limits

To the editors:

At the risk of being a politically correct scold, I am writing to express my annoyance at Fred Barnes's misuse of the term "schizophrenia" ("Schizoid," July 13 & 20). People who suffer from schizophrenia do not have Jekyll-and-Hyde split personalities. The term "schizophrenia" refers to a split from reality, not a split personality.

Schizophrenia is a disease of the brain, a cruel and costly disease. Those who have it—more than 2 million in this country alone—suffer enough without the added burdens of stigma and misinformation that are all too prevalent.

JOE HOLLEY
Austin, Texas

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FROM WASHINGTON

Air on an L string

Here we go again. Pin the tail on the donkey. Dan Quayle says he knows how to spell the word liberal: "C-L-I-N-T-O-N." Bill Clinton says that he rejects "failed categories" like "liberal versus conservative" and that Republicans are stuck on "liberal, liberal, liberal" like the needle on an old record. Beyond question, the Bush campaigners, despairing of any positive case to be made for their own candidate, are planning to make the L-word a central part of their strategy. What's less clear is whether indignant denial is the best response.

It is indeed "a load of bull," as Clinton says, to suggest that he's a "liberal" as the Republicans would like to define that word. In the first place, no Democratic presidential candidate—maybe not even George McGovern—has ever fit this GOP fantasy definition of a liberal as some kind of space alien, a lover of bureaucracy and big government, hater of America, pacifist, whose hobbies are raising taxes, flag burning, and gay marriage. Certainly Michael Dukakis—a managerial neoliberal type—never fit the sandal-wearing fruitcake portrait the Republicans successfully painted of him.

In the second place Clinton, if he believes in anything at all, clearly believes that the Democratic Party should be more "moderate," more "mainstream," and less "liberal." Or at least he has devoted most of his public life to that cause. His moderation, whatever that means, is not a confection whipped up for his convention acceptance speech. You don't have to be Barry Goldwater to wonder about the virtues of moderation, but Clinton and his friends at the Democratic Leadership Council are devoted practitioners.

Nevertheless, it is also true that by any standard definition of the word (as opposed to Republican parodies), Clinton is still a liberal. By most reasonable definitions, so is George Bush. And not just in the classic eighteenth-century sense of a believer in individual freedom, but in the post-New Deal American sense of a believer in activist government. Even at the height of their 1980s vainglory, the Republicans never attempted to tear down the pillars of that liberalism: Social Security, civil rights, Medicare, and so on. In fact, they never attempted more than minor damage to some of liberalism's lesser architectural flourishes like OSHA and EPA. (These last two, like many favorite Republican rhetorical targets, actually were installed by a Republican president, Richard Nixon.)

As *The Economist* last week pointed out, George Bush simultaneously accuses Bill Clinton of plagiarizing his ideas and insists that he and Clinton disagree about "almost everything." But if, as *The Economist* asserts, much of this year's Democratic platform reads as if it could have been written by a Republican, that is due at least as much to adoption of the liberal agenda by Republicans as it is any abandonment of the liberal agenda by Democrats.

Writing in the Heritage Foundation's *Policy Review*, Representative Vin Weber, who is tipped to become co-chairman of the Bush-Quayle re-election campaign, blames Republican problems on an "idea vacuum" compared with the Reagan days. But it's not as if the Reagan revolution was completed without an encore. In fact, the Reagan revolution never happened. That is why it was so popular. Government is bigger than ever. Pretending to cut government without really doing it was one secret of Reagan's political success. And the limits of that particular con game are one reason for Bush's possible political failure.

Weber's main suggestion for filling the idea vacuum—on everything from urban squalor to family values—is, of course, a renewed capital gains tax break. The capital gains break was eliminated in Reagan's own 1986 tax reform, heralded as one of his great achievements. So, whatever the idea's substantive merits, you can't very well claim the mantle of Reaganism for it. It amounts to a reversal of Reaganism, not Reaganism Restored.

These days, when Bush accuses Clinton of "liberalism," it is largely an accusation of fiscal responsibility—the suggestion that a Democrat might make the country pay for more of the government it's getting. Clinton is not guilty on that charge. His fiscal math is only slightly more responsible than Bush's.

Of course Clinton goes beyond Bush in his vision of the government's role in the economy and society. From public infrastructure investment through social questions like parental leave to the environment, a Clinton administration would be more "liberal" than Bush's has been. And, while avoiding the dirty word itself, Clinton is not afraid to say so. "George Bush, if you won't use your power to help people, step aside. I will."

Bush and the Republicans, by contrast, while brandishing the L-word against the enemy, often are afraid to say point-blank that the commander in chief should stay out of this area or that. Health care, for example. Weber says market-oriented reform, as opposed to "statist" solutions, should be high on the list of new conservative ideas. But health care reform wouldn't be on his agenda at all if Democrats and liberals hadn't put it there. And however market-oriented his own formula, he acknowledges the principle that the government should guarantee universal access to health care. That is something it does not do now, and would be a clear expansion of the liberal state no matter how it is arranged.

Yes, fine, but all this is a bit hard to squeeze into a soundbite. So what do we do about the *word*? Clinton's basic strategy this year is to look at what Dukakis did... and do the opposite. On the L-word, though, he seems to be following Dukakis's "What? Me Liberal?" approach. Dukakis huffily rejected the label until nine days before the election, when he suddenly declared, "Yes, I am a liberal." And his polls shot up—though not by enough.

The commentators will be telling Clinton, as they told Dukakis incessantly (I may even have been one of them), that he should forthrightly embrace the noble if tattered banner of liberalism with a stirring speech invoking FDR, Truman, blah blah blah. That would be bracing, but would it be wise? I'm not so sure. The Republicans have done such a brilliant job at poisoning the word "liberal"—without rejecting most of the content of liberalism—that it sometimes surfaces in the pages of this very journal as a sort of all-purpose undefined political pejorative.

If Clinton can get elected on a frank platform of revitalized government, I won't begrudge him a bit of evasion on "liberal." It's only a word. This is politics, not Scrabble.

MICHAEL KINSLEY

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

AUGUST 17 & 24, 1992

RESCUE BOSNIA

At least Bill Clinton has a plan for a U.S.-led military effort to punish the Serbian aggressors in Bosnia and Herzegovina: through the U.N. Security Council, the international community would charge Serbian leaders with crimes against humanity such as genocidal "ethnic cleansing"; the U.S. Navy would tighten the U.N. embargo against Serbia and its ally Montenegro by stopping and inspecting ships on the Adriatic; and the United States would participate in air strikes "against those attacking the [U.N.] relief effort" in Sarajevo.

Finally someone in this campaign has spoken seriously about a serious foreign policy question. What does George Bush think of the Clinton idea? "Reckless," harrumphed his spokesman, Marlin Fitzwater. It was a curious display of contempt from the very White House that Democrats had branded as reckless for taking on Iraq, and that, with Clinton's support, continues to threaten Saddam with military action for his shell game with U.N. nuclear inspectors. But apparently campaign point-scoring is a higher Bush priority than a small, besieged nation that looks to Washington for help. Yes, George Bush is still president and leader of the free world, which means he has greater responsibilities than candidate Clinton. But that only heightens our dismay over the attack on Clinton: it will have real effects in the real world, the most important of which will be to reinforce the pusillanimity of the European powers to which Bush has handed off the Balkan crisis—and to embolden the very Serbians who are attempting to bleed, pound, and starve the people of Bosnia into submission.

The Bush-Clinton tiff over Bosnia exemplifies the post-cold war paradigm shifts taking place in the foreign policies of the two parties. As Francis Fukuyama writes in these pages (see "The Beginning of Foreign Policy," page 24), the American foreign policy debate in the new world order seems likely to be in part a debate between Democratic interventionism in the name of high ideals and Republican world-weariness about potential quagmires called Bosnia. We agree with Fukuyama that U.S. foreign policy-making in the future will consist largely of selecting the best course between these two poles, on a case-by-case basis.

Bosnia presents a particularly hard case. "It's clear [Clinton] is unaware of the political complications in Yugoslavia," sniffs Fitzwater. Fair enough: for centuries, the Balkans have confounded those who arrived to set the place right by Christmas. Our leaders have a duty to avoid commitments that would entail more risk to American life than the public is willing to tolerate—or than American interests merit. Clinton's proposal did not call for using U.S. (or European) ground forces in the Bosnian fray. But Clinton also doesn't explain how his program would remain limited to air strikes, which are never as surgical in practice as they are on the planning boards. What happens if, say, the Serb forces try to up the ante by shooting down our planes and helicopters, or by launching a massive attack on the U.N. troops in Sarajevo? Do we go in on the ground then?

Clinton's plan is also oddly silent on the question of helping the Bosnians help themselves militarily. Up to now, Bosnia has been subject to the same U.N. arms embargo as Serbia, in spite of the fact that the republic is clearly fighting a defensive war, one that its people seem willing to wage themselves. The government of President Alia Izetbegovic has begged for the embargo to be lifted, meanwhile entering into a devil's bargain with the forces of Croatia for limited help. Allowing weapons transfers to Bosnia—and supplying U.S. weapons to balance the military forces in the war—offers a way to check the Serbs without unduly placing U.S. forces at risk.

The Balkan war is not so "politically complicated" that no judgment about its morality can be made. It is not merely an "ethnic conflict." It is a campaign in which a discrete faction of Serbian nationalists has manipulated ethnic sentiment in order to seize power and territory. It is an act of international aggression, an assault on a member of the United Nations. Despite the U.N.'s condemnation, there have been too many platitudes about the responsibility of "all factions" for the war. This lazy language is an escape hatch through which outside powers flee their responsibilities. Perhaps Europeans are just embarrassed by the spectacle of primordial violence on the edge of their own proudly postmodern continent.

The United States ought firmly to explain to its allies that we and they have a vital interest in the sanctity of internationally recognized borders. Instead, Washington continues to dither as the government of Bosnia loses more ground. It now controls little more than the area around the presidential building in Sarajevo and a few other towns. Serbs control most of the rest of the country, and are "ethnically cleansing" it on a monstrous scale. If the United States doesn't take the lead soon, Bosnia may find itself cleansed into extinction. •

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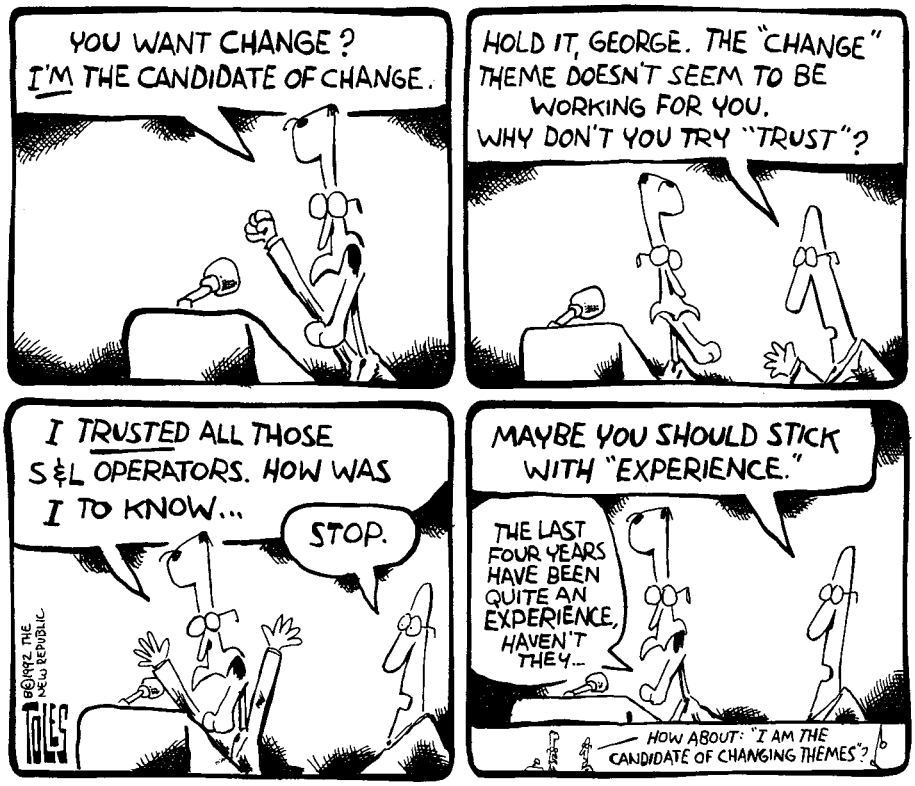
NOTEBOOK

BUSHISM OF THE WEEK: "So we've got to win that drug fight, and we have got the biggest and best research by far, uh, program of any country in the world, but it's a national problem, it's one where we really—it's, it's Heartbreak Hill, it's just everybody in one way or another has a friend that's been touched with this and we'll just simply have to, have to win this fight, and I'm optimistic we will." —July 20, talking to children about AIDS in the Rose Garden
(thanks to Carisa Cunningham, Washington, D.C.)

HORTATORIUM: Marian Wright Edelman says welfare is the Willie Horton of 1992. Chuck Philips of the *Los Angeles Times* says Dan Quayle is making Ice-T into a Willie Horton. Sister Souljah said *she* is the new Willie Horton, thanks to Bill Clinton. Gabriel Rotello wrote in *Newsday* that George Bush wants to replace Willie Horton with "Wilie Homo." A headline in *Time* reads: AFTER WILLIE HORTON ARE GAYS NEXT? Marlon Riggs, the director of the film "Tongues Untied," says Pat Buchanan's Willie Horton was "a leather-clad, bare-chested, sadomasochistic homosexual dancing shamelessly in the street." A voter quoted in *The Washington Times* says he hopes marital fidelity will not become the Willie Horton of 1992. Jerry Brown said a photo of Sam Nunn and Bill Clinton in front of a Georgia prison looked like "a bunch of Willie Hortons" with "two white guys standing in front of them like colonial masters." Someone wrote to the *Los Angeles Times* that Soon Da Ju, a grocer who shot a 15-year-old black girl, was being made into the Korean Willie Horton. Meanwhile, *The New York Times* says Newt Gingrich is trying to make New York the Willie Horton of 1992. Properly understood, Willie Horton is an example of politicians using partial or distorted information to play on white racism and fear of black crime. As it has proliferated, however, the metaphor has become meaningless; it now signifies little more than something somebody else doesn't like in the course of a presidential campaign. To improve discussion of what remains of the 1992 election, a modest suggestion: let's furlough "Willie Horton" for the duration.


YOU WANT CHANGE? I'M THE CANDIDATE OF CHANGE.
HOLD IT, GEORGE. THE "CHANGE" THEME DOESN'T SEEM TO BE WORKING FOR YOU. WHY DON'T YOU TRY "TRUST"?
I TRUSTED ALL THOSE S&L OPERATORS. HOW WAS I TO KNOW...
STOP.
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TOLES
MAYBE YOU SHOULD STICK WITH "EXPERIENCE."
THE LAST FOUR YEARS HAVE BEEN QUITE AN EXPERIENCE, HAVEN'T THEY...
HOW ABOUT: "I AM THE CANDIDATE OF CHANGING THEMES"?

IT'S BACK: If you doubt Michael Fumento's claim that the media have grossly distorted the risk of AIDS to teenagers (see "Teenaids," TNR, August 10), read last week's *Newsweek*. Fumento noted that without exception, the press has presented teen AIDS as a growing problem, which means you have to ignore the fact that the tiny number of such cases actually *fell* from 1990 to 1991. (*Newsweek* points to a 77 percent increase, based on the same statistical fallacy TNR noted last week.) Fumento also noted that the media invariably make teen AIDS a problem of white straights of both sexes, when most cases are minority, male, and gay. Sure enough, *Newsweek*'s cover has a white girl who says she got HIV through sex with a man, and includes three more photos of two white girls inside. Fumento noted that most teenagers with AIDS didn't get the disease from sex, but from hemophilia clotting factor, with gay male teens as the second-largest category. *Newsweek* ignored this, referring instead to a random survey of infected college students without noting that 95 percent of them were male. The article states: "Teens are at the mercy of adults—parents, teachers, politicians—who often won't give young people the information they desperately need to make the right choices about their sexual behavior." Right, and add *Newsweek* to the list.

ALL-STAR BREAK: This is a combined issue, and TNR will not be appearing next week. We will be playing the founding editors of THE NEW REPUBLIC in an old timers game. •

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CONSUMED

RHINOPHILIA

By Tad Friend

I grew up in the '70s, the Bangladesh of decades. For a long time I thought that all I had left was the requisite nostalgic puzzlement about Led Zeppelin—"If there's a bustle in your hedgerow, don't be alarmed now / It's just a sprinkling for the May Queen."

But nostalgia for the dopey is a powerful force in human affairs: it makes you mushy, pliant, and ripe for harvesting by the grim combines of commerce. Consider the Rhino Records catalog. Catalogs usually succeed by marketing the future as delightful auguries, lifestyle poppers. Thus L.L. Bean offers the hard, pure scrape of autumn in Maine; Patagonia, a dream of rappelling to rescue your ice-bound Sherpa; and White Flower Farm, a world of wheelbarrow civility that blossoms from the photos of loosestrife and meadow rue.

But Rhino aims with deadly accuracy at the past. Specifically, at a collective adolescence, particularly one enjoyed in the '70s. Most of us didn't grow up wearing poplin footy pajamas or climbing K2, and so can resist blandishments along those lines. But who didn't grow up learning from K.C. and the Sunshine Band how to "(Shake, Shake, Shake) Shake Your Booty"?

Rhino's tremendously popular fifteen-volume *Have a Nice Day!* collection, which has sold about 300,000 units, falls on unsuspecting minds as an awful summons to dial the 800 number. For me, even seeing the words "Seasons in the Sun" is a Proustian madeleine. Terry Jacks's song conjures up sixth grade in all its fell promise: that suburban returning from a soccer game in someone's dad's Chevy Impala and getting a sundae at the Dairy Queen and brooding about puberty and .earing those soggy lyrics on the car radio ("But the stars we could reach / Were just starfish on the beach") and, suddenly, understanding that this was popular culture—as popular and as cultural as it got—and that by dipping your shaggy head on the downbeat you became part of it.

The power of Terry Jacks, Gilbert O'Sullivan ("Alone Again (Naturally)"), and Lobo ("Me and You and a Dog Named Boo") lies in their obscurity, their air of being delved from beneath a weight of intervening years. The Beatles and the Stones don't evoke the same startled and half-shameful pleasure.

The philosophic idea here—the logo of Lobo—is what Walker Percy called "repetition": "the re-enactment of past experience toward the end of isolating the time segment which has lapsed in order that it, the lapsed time, can be savored of itself and without the usual adulteration of events ..." How you savor the lapsed time is your business. Rhino's business is gathering these little repetition-triggers and marketing the hell out of them. Their success in the first place was all marketing—how else to account for the Bay City Rollers?—but in this remarketing, this "anthologizing," Rhino effectively certifies such figures as Dionne Warwick and the Chi-Lites, investing them with curatorial grandeur.

But Rhino certifies pretty much everything, so its genuinely interesting compilations (*James Brown's Greatest Hits, The Jack Kerouac Collection, Great Speeches of the 20th Century*) are inevitably flattened to the level of its inanities (*The Best of Badfinger, Vol. 2, Michael Nesmith: The Older Stuff—The Best of the Early Years*). Even when Rhino revels in kitsch—*Golden Throats: The Great Celebrity Sing-Off!* features such horror shows as "Star Trek"'s William Shatner intoning "Mr. Tambourine Man," just one of "the most vacuous versions of pop classics ever recorded!"— the implicit theme is always "it may be kitsch, but it shaped *you*, so it's important kitsch."

Which leads me to wonder. Simply because at one point in January 1976 it occurred to many people that it would be potent to purchase C.W. McCall's "Convoy," does "Convoy" now have historical weight? Why? Still a little uneasy about that, Rhino devotes its back cover to information on AIDS, homelessness, and other issues of the day ("Rhino Records urges you to ... spay or neuter your cat or dog"). This is meant to place the merchandising in a context of social consciousness. Buying "Convoy" fifteen years after the CB radio boom isn't solipsism, Rhino implies, it's sociology. It's a tool for understanding the culture.

Uh, huh. In fact, the beauty of the '70s is that it defies frameworks. Its prevailing ethos—a willful, cheerful, and profound wrong turn—is near to our hearts still. Twenty years ago Gary Glitter recorded "Rock and Roll Part 2," a one-hit wonder that, by any rigorous aesthetic criterion, should have long since been recycled into bucket seats and ski boots. But the song still blasts in basketball arenas all over the country, whipping up the crowd. We understand that its dumbness (the lyrics are one word, "Hey!," shouted repeatedly) is its strength. We no longer worry about that. We accept it. At times, we even revel in it. So Rhino turns out to be marketing the future after all—a prospect of blissful, no-brainer womb-curling. The stars we can reach are still starfish on the beach.

TAD FRIEND is a contributing editor to *Esquire* and *Vogue*.

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BELTWAY HEAVEN

By Michael Lewis

Outside of wartime there is no precedent for the steady barrage of vicious propaganda that the city of Washington has endured since the eve of Reagan. The general idea is that at some indefinite point in the past the people who work in and around the federal government lost touch with genuine American values. This explains why they cannot balance the budget, reduce crime, eliminate poverty, tell the truth, etc., etc. And the familiar catch-all to describe how people here differ from people in Kansas or Honolulu is the now ubiquitous insult, "Inside the Beltway." Anyone with an enemy to baste somewhere near the Capitol can deploy it. *The Washington Post* uses it to tar its least favorite Republicans (Meg Greenfield on John Sununu: "His inside-the-Beltway sensibility [reflects] an unbridgeable gap between the way people think here and the way they think practically everywhere else.") The Republicans in turn use it quite as loudly to describe *The Washington Post* (Representative Bill Archer, when asked about a *Post* editorial that criticized a bill he liked: "Well, we all know where *The Washington Post* comes from. It's an inside-the-Beltway mentality. It does not represent what the minds of the American people are thinking.")

I have only just moved to the city, so for all I know it is true that, despite their constant, prodigious efforts to suck up to the average American, Washingtonians are finally unable to divine the contents of the average American mind. If so, they aren't much different from their counterparts in Hollywood and on Madison Avenue, who are in much the same line of work. But there is one way, very obvious to the newcomer, in which the life of the average Washingtonian (or at least the average upper-middle-class white Washingtonian) does differ from the life of the average citizen of other American cities, and especially those of Los Angeles and New York. He doesn't spend most of it thinking and talking about money.

The absence of money values may be partly caused by the vague anti-materialistic sentiments of the sorts of young college graduates who choose Washington over New York and Los Angeles. But more likely there is another reason: this is a rare place in America where money is a poor measure of status. The people working in and around government have long grown used to the strange idea that pay is more related to tenure than to importance; the members of Washington's abundant middle class earn pretty much the same middling sums of money; and it is assumed by all that no one is getting rich and that everyone can afford to eat at the same modest restaurants. In this culture it is hard to see how money could buy status. Arriving with a pile of gold and hoping to make a mark, you would have to be far more nimble here than in New York or Los Angeles. If you proceed with stealth you might buy a politician or two, but, since it's against the rules to let people know that you own them, they don't bring you much street cred. The whole city is asleep by ten, which rules out a series of grotesque parties. The strict zoning laws, which have preserved the views of monuments to dead politicians, sadly prevent the attention-starved billionaire from building even larger ones to himself.

As a result, the subject of money is viewed with a remarkable detachment. The sensitive topic here is the far more nebulous notion of position or influence. This may be what many outsiders find vexing about Washington—why a billionaire like Ross Perot, for example, was so weirdly insistent that Washington is not "real." Washington strips the winners of the money game of their favorite tool of psychological torture. When Perot claimed that "Washington is nothing but an artificial city created with taxpayer money," one had the sense that it wouldn't count for anything until it had been relocated to Dallas and turned into a profit-making enterprise.

A great deal has been said about the pernicious consequences of having a capital city full of people who don't know the value of capital; nary a word about the many benefits to a community that forswears, for whatever reason, the notion that wealth is a good measure of importance. The first is that its civic life becomes far more humane. When money is removed from serious consideration, the finer invidious distinctions among people are removed from the public arena, for there is no handy yardstick for measuring people. The average resident of Washington, undistinguished within his institution, has far fewer daily reminders than his counterpart in, say, New York that he has failed to realize the promise of his youth. It may be clear to all that the president is the most important person in town; it may be clear to people within a single institution who is important and who is not; but otherwise it is much harder to read status here than in other centers of power. Who counts for more: the Supreme Court clerk or the special assistant in the State Department? The Senate speechwriter or the Heritage Foundation consultant?

As it happens, THE NEW REPUBLIC offers a serviceable illustration of the Washington status game in action. The magazine, though privately owned, has all the salient qualities of a Washington institution: its goal is something other than to make money; it does not pay well, but it is still able to keep its employees relatively happy. It lists on its masthead fourteen people who, by dint of title, could plausibly be mistaken for the boss: an editor in chief and chairman, a publisher, a president, an editor, an executive editor, and nine senior editors. So far as I can make out, this little piece of fraudulence slides smoothly down the public throat. Although no one in Washington seems the least bit interested in what I am

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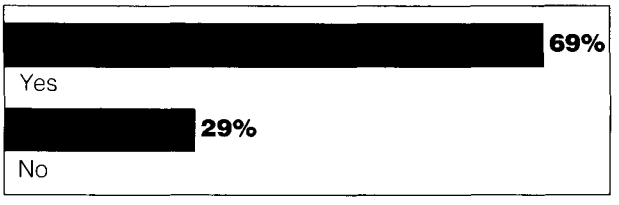
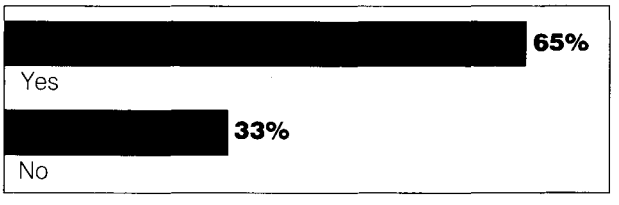


Would a National Healthcare Budget lead to the rationing of health services?



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paid, everyone wants to know my title, which I happily provide. For I am called a senior editor, even though I am senior to no one and I do not edit anything. Of course people outside will sooner or later catch on to the true meaning of the title, just as they catch on to inflation of a currency. But by then, there will have been yet another jiggle on the strings from above, keeping us one step ahead of public understanding.

Washington enables us to see how cheaply a sense of importance can be conferred upon a large and unprofitable population, once the money ethic is removed. And the fact that Washington's large middle class actually feels good about its place in the world goes some way to explaining why this widely loathed, artificial city is so livable; such a population submits much more readily to the system of voluntary, interpersonal taxes and subsidies that make life on the streets bearable. Can it be more than a matter of time before "inside the Beltway," like every other political insult ("Tory," "Neoconservative," "Impressionist"), becomes a mark of distinction? •

Nicaragua's U.S. patrons.

SISTERHOOD

By Eric Scigliano

Consider the plight of one more set of post-cold war orphans. During the 1980s Sandinista sympathizers in hundreds of North American and European cities used sister-city ties in Nicaragua to channel opposition to the contras and dodge the U.S. trade embargo. But the Sandinistas' 1990 electoral loss turned these relationships topsy-turvy. The northern sandalistas didn't know what to do with their UNO foster sisters. And Nicaragua's new anti-Sandinista city governments didn't know whether to shun their new relations or welcome them as potential sugar sisters.

Managua has always broken and formed ties quickly. Under the Somoza dictatorship, Managua was hitched to Hialeah, a Miami suburb with large Cuban and Nicaraguan populations. Hialeah cut the knot when the FSLN overthrew Somoza in 1979. But revolutionary Managua was wooed and won by Seattle and Madison, leaders in civic foreign policy-making and anti-contra defiance.

Then in 1990 Arnaldo Aleman Lacayo was elected mayor of Managua. Aleman, a moderate turned hardliner with a reputation as the Spiro Agnew of the Nicaraguan right, sent an emissary to the Wisconsin Coordinating Council on Nicaragua in Madison. Aleman's man "told us we did things all wrong," recalls WCCN executive director Sonia Taddy, "the way we functioned, the activities we undertook, the people we worked with."

The mistrust was mutual. Seattle-Nicaragua Sister City chair Roy D. Wilson dismisses Aleman as "ideologically to the right of David Duke and Patrick Buchanan. He's not interested in arts, education, or cultural exchange. He's interested in *money*, and we're not worth his time." The Aleman administration went where the money was: back to Miami, home to more than 100,000 Sandanismo-hating Nicaraguan émigrés. Miami gladly consented to the tie. "We've given them our surplus garbage trucks and other trucks, and a street sweeper," boasts Miami assistant city manager Carlos Smith. This sort of aid is more visible than the medicines, school books, and construction brigades Seattle and Madison used to send. Sports exchanges are also popular. Nicaragua's national baseball team went to play Miami college all-stars, then hosted them in Managua. "We're looking at sending an amateur basketball team down," says Smith, "and we've given them advice on starting a rowing team."

And then a cloud appeared: about two years earlier the D.C.-based clearinghouse Sister Cities International refused to recognize new ties in nations where member cities already had sisters. No problem, Aleman wrote to SCI: Managua would now cherish Miami alone; relations with Seattle and Madison had lately been "*totalmente inactivos*" anyway.

That came as a surprise to Seattle and Madison organizers, who had continued funding scholarships, clinics, and an ecological study of polluted Lake Managua. They didn't learn of the break until last March, when SCI forwarded Aleman's eight-month-old letter. "We'll go on as we have for eleven years," says Wilson. "The new administration there has never really hosted us. We have plenty of other contracts—churches, child-development centers, school faculty, youth groups, former Sandinistas who are now on the City Council."

Most mayors, however, are happy to accept whatever comes. Lionel Teller, sister cities liaison in Nicaragua's Washington embassy, estimates the relationships provided half of the $70 million in non-governmental aid Nicaragua got from abroad last year. Sandinista governments won re-election in Leon and Jalape and continue their ties to New Haven, Boulder, Colorado, and Port Townsend, Washington. Other cities' new conservative administrations have tolerated or welcomed their inherited siblings. One left-leaning U.S. sister-city coordinator admits the new UNO mayor in her counterpart city is "ten times easier to deal with" than the old Sandinista one.

But things got testy in Nagarote, sister city of Norwalk, Connecticut, when UNO won a stormy election in which a Sandinista organizer was killed. "The new UNO mayor formed his own sister-city committee," says Norwalk's Scott Harris. "But the old Sandinista committee was still in place. We really were stalled—which were we going to work with?" Both, it turned out: Norwalk helped broker a truce and, finally, a merger between the rival groups.

Other U.S. sister-city coordinators say they have run into new official roadblocks to aid. The UNO government has stepped up efforts to fight the smuggling of consumer goods, which Teller says has burgeoned at ports of

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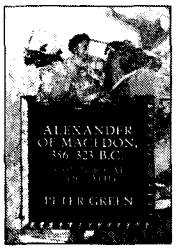

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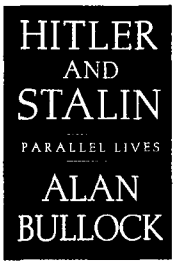

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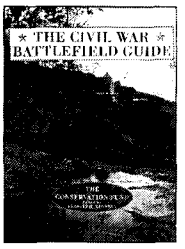

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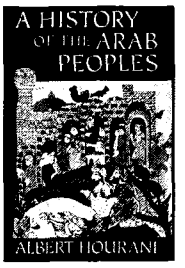

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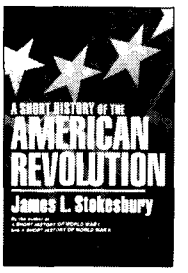

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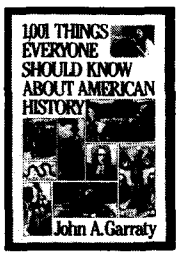

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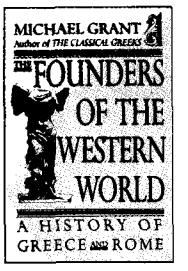

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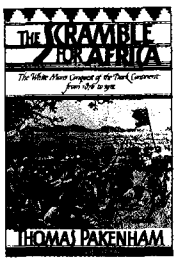

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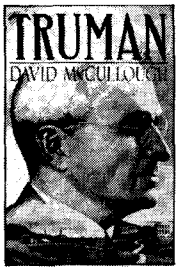

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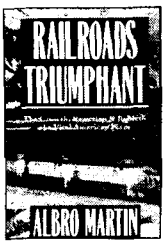

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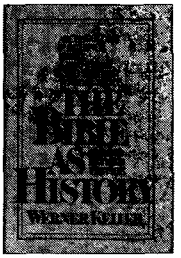

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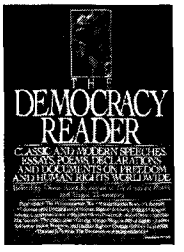

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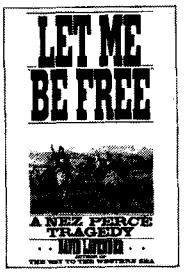

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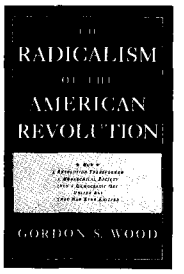

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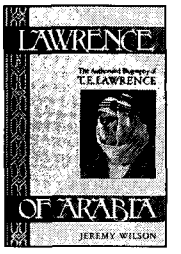

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entry since the war ended and floods of émigrés began returning. Philanthropic donations are supposed to pass duty free, and the embassy in Washington provides letters of passage. Still, some groups say their aid packages have been impounded by overeager customs inspectors.

The Chamorro government attempted to clear up such misunderstandings and renew its ties by hosting an international sister-cities conference in late May at Somoza's old villa at Montelimar. But some of the more active U.S. sister-city groups never received invitations. Blame bureaucratic shortcomings, however, rather than any intent to exclude the Sandinistas' old allies; Teller says the new UNO diplomats "found a lot of files missing and destroyed," and didn't know how to contact many sister-city groups.

That points up the increasing irrelevance of the national government, whether Sandinista or UNO, to the grass-roots exchanges between North Americans and Nicaraguans. Some of the more ideological sister-city and "Nicaraguan solidarity" groups have seen their donations and volunteers flag as the Sandinistas' star has fallen. "I see the program laying low till another crisis happens in Nicaragua," says Portland sister-city coordinator Tim Calvert. But coordinators in Boulder, New Haven, Seattle, and other cities who have built broader non-official relationships say donations have held steady or grown since UNO's ascension. Since then eight sister pairings have disbanded, but ten new ones have formed.

For some sisters, traditional boosterism helps fill the vacuum left by deflated revolutionary romance. Nicaragua's politics may be murkier now, but its trade lines are open. And some ex-sandalistas actually seem to be doing what good sisters are supposed to, despite lingering suspicions on both sides. They may have come to tweak Washington, but they've stayed to help Matagalpa and Leon. Now what has Ollie North done for Nicaragua lately?

ERIC SCIGLIANO is a senior editor at the *Seattle Weekly*.

Is Bush brain-damaged?

THE SPEECH THING

By Jesse Furman

"Is it too early in—well, thanks for those kind words. But is it too early to ask the commissioners—are you beginning—of course, the commission's been, what, in effect seventy days or something like that, seventy-seven days—traveled to many states, which I think is very important, because I think it's important that when the report comes in, it has a national concept to it, that it isn't regional in any sense." Thus spake George Bush in a July 24 roundtable discussion with members of the National Urban Family Commission. There's nothing distinctive about this outpouring. Bush's utterances—with their twisted syntax, missing nouns and pronouns, context breaks, and non sequiturs—have long been a source of amusement. But as the November election nears, a more serious question presents itself: Is there actually something wrong with Bush's brain?

The 68-year-old president's mangled speech does in fact reveal a number of characteristics associated with a brain disorder called aphasia: frequent grammatical errors, talking around subjects, groping unsuccessfully for the right word, and substituting one word for another of close meaning or similar sound. Lack of substance—or "emptiness," as the specialists put it—is also a common symptom of aphasia. On "20/20" with Barbara Walters President Bush mistakenly confused the word "divorce" with "abortion"; he often substitutes the word "thing"—as in the "vision thing" or the "law enforcement thing"—when more substantive words evade him; and his use of mixed metaphors is downright bizarre, as in his 1989 refusal to answer a reporter's persistent questions about the Oliver North trial: "Please don't ask me to do that which I've just said I'm not going to do, because you're burning up time; the meter is running through the sand on you, and I am now filibustering." In a recent statement, Bush seemed to demonstrate these aphasic symptoms all at once: "It is weird. I guess this is the normal procedure every four years—the amount of food I was eating and how did Barbara feel about it, and she said to me, what about your health. I said, well, I'm not eating too much, or something. It turned out it was the rumors."

Bush is not the only Republican president of recent years to be suspected of mental defects. Eisenhower, renowned for his own opaque prose, showed classic signs of aphasia, substituting "senator" for "governor," for example. And Reagan, with his frequent pauses and memory lapses, was often thought to be suffering some degenerative brain disease. "I used to think that Reagan had lost it, that there was something terribly wrong with Reagan's brain, that he was demented and aphasic to a certain extent," said Alan Rubens, chairman of the neurology department at the University of Arizona. "But then one of my neuropsychology friends who grew up in California said he had always spoken that way."

Indeed, neurological experts caution that merely possessing some symptoms of aphasia does not necessarily mean one is suffering from a brain disorder. Since aphasia in the United States is most commonly the *acquired* result of a stroke or Alzheimer's, a long-term exhibition of aphasic symptoms implies that a patient is not aphasic. "Yes, George Bush is a very inarticulate person when it comes to public speaking, and it will probably cost him his presidency, but you can't

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say he's aphasic. He's always been inarticulate," says Dr. Andrew Kertesz, professor of neurology at the University of Western Ontario. Dr. David Caplan, an associate professor of neurology at Harvard, agrees: "I didn't follow his career back when he was running in Texas, but I would be really surprised if at that point the man sounded like Cicero." In other words, Bush (like Reagan) is not aphasic because he has always spoken dysfunctionally.

Nevertheless, aphasia, according to Dr. Michael Alexander, an associate professor of neurology at Boston University, "does not have a mandatory method of onset." He says, "There are two broad categories: one is considered to be acquired, as in a stroke ... the other is developmental aphasia where there is an abnormal development of the brain." George Bush, Dr. Alexander posits, might suffer from the latter. "He has trouble at word finding, and over the years he has compensated for it with a variety of filler strategies: he uses short, punchy lines; he talks around the topic; when he runs up against a word that he can't come up with, he tends to move tangentially and describe it." Responding to those who say there is no evidence that Bush has suffered from any brain *disease*, Dr. Alexander says, "That's fine, but he was born with a brain *problem*," and that causes him to speak aphasically.

Bush's aphasic speaking patterns, doctors assure us, should not be taken as an early sign of Alzheimer's or the manifestation of an undisclosed stroke. They merely indicate, in Dr. Alexander's words, that his "brain is not wired properly." Should this be cause for worry? "It doesn't affect his clarity of thought—probably," Dr. Alexander said. "Bush has some difficulty in being completely articulate," says Dr. Caplan, "but that has nothing to do with his intelligence." Since he exhibited the same symptoms in the past, "I'm not concerned," says Dr. Rubens. Neither, it seems, is the patient. "I've been talking the same way for years," he said before the 1988 election, "so it can't be that serious." •

Slovakia's halfhearted secession.

CZECH OFF

By Jacques Rupnik

With the resignation of President Vaclav Havel on July 17, it seemed clear that Czechoslovakia, like Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, was in the process of centrifugal collapse. Havel's decision followed the dramatic legislative elections of June 5, in which the Czechs elected as their new prime minister Vaclav Klaus, an adept of radical economic liberalism (a kind of Czech John Major), and the Slovaks overwhelmingly went for Vladimir Meciar, neo-separatist leader of the Movement for Democratic Slovakia and an opponent of the free market. Faced with the choice of an accelerated leap into the unknown of capitalism and a wish to preserve some of the remnants of state socialism, Czechs voted for the former and the Slovaks for the latter. All of this was taken as proof of Czechoslovakia's demise. It was, in fact, the beginning of a process of pragmatic bargaining, the conclusion of which is by no means certain.

The resignation of Havel was actually the catalyst for a new, and more equal dialogue between the two nations. Havel's statement came only minutes after the "declaration of sovereignty" by the Slovak Parliament. Suddenly the center of political gravity shifted from the federal level to the leaderships of the two republics, and to their new premiers. The negotiations between Klaus and Meciar may have accelerated the pace of separation, but they have also introduced an element of mutual recognition. For the last two years the Czechs have referred to values, to feelings, to the sense of shared history in dealing with Slovakia while denying the fundamental Slovak quest for an independent political identity. Now they have to acknowledge it. For their part, the Slovaks, having won this recognition, now have to confront the cold reality of their relationship with the Czechs. In terms of population, they are outnumbered two to one; in terms of contribution to the joint GNP, four to one; and in terms of contribution to the federal budget, ten to one.

Perhaps the greatest source of misunderstanding springs from Czechs' and Slovaks' different readings of their long, entangled history. For 1,000 years the two nations have lived separate lives. The Czechs had a state, the kingdom of Bohemia; the Slovaks didn't. Under the Hapsburgs, Bohemia became the most economically advanced part of Austria. Slovakia, meanwhile, was in the most rural part of Hungary, and in the nineteenth century Hungary followed a policy of Magyarization, which hindered the emergence of a cultural and political elite comparable to the Czech one. The 1918 union, on the ruins of the Austro-Hungarian empire under the presidency of Tomas Masaryk, was deceptive: the two "cousin" nations spoke similar languages, but they did not know each other at all.

What followed can be summed up as intermittent mutual disappointment. The Slovaks feel the Czechs did not keep their promises of autonomy in 1918 and 1945. The Czechs believe the Slovaks have twice abandoned the Czechoslovak democracy to its sad destiny in the name of their narrowly defined national interest. In 1938, after Munich, the breakup of Czechoslovakia allowed for the creation of the pro-Nazi Slovak state; in 1968 the Slovaks chose federation over the

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democratization of the Prague Spring. The project of state federalization survived the Soviet occupation, but it was reduced to what Havel calls a "federalized totalitarianism."

The result was that the word "federation"—like the word "socialism"—has been discredited by the ancien régime's doings. And yet the experience after 1968 (ruthlessly carried out by the Slovak duo of Gustav Husak and Vasil Bilak) was much harder in Prague than in Bratislava. Dissident and human rights movements, like Charter 77, were essentially Czech phenomena; Slovakia seemed to adapt better to the situation and even benefited from it economically, because the prosperous Czechs subsidized the more backward Slovakia. These differences clarify the current situation. The Czechs insist on recognition of the continuity of a common state, even if important powers would be transferred to the republics. The Slovaks want first to obtain the recognition of two sovereign entities. Those two could later, the Slovaks hope, as subjects of the international law, be linked by a treaty. In other words: federation from above on the Czech side, "confederation" from below on the Slovak side.

As these two notions collide, some sort of breakup will occur, but it will be a peaceful and inevitably interdependent one. Czechoslovakia is not Yugoslavia, where those who declared themselves for independence, the Slovenes and the Croats, were also the most advanced in shedding communism, the most prosperous, the most "Westernized." Their counterparts are the Czechs rather than the Slovaks. But above all, between the Czechs and the Slovaks, there is no dispute over borders or national minorities. And Havel is no Milosevic. Since the fall of 1990, Havel (who continues to be popular in Slovakia) has declared that the separation is not desirable, but that it is possible provided it is done in a democratic and peaceful way.

Unlike their counterparts in former Yugoslavia, the Slovak separatists are anxious. Until now, they have refused to take part in a referendum, for fear they might be unsuccessful. In fact they understood that though the majority of Slovaks want a symbolic and political recognition of their identity, they also fear the costs of the separation. There is the real possibility of an economic disaster. Nobody will be there to soak up the Slovak budgetary deficit; they will have even less hope of attracting foreign investment (over 90 percent already goes to the Czech lands).

But above all, the historical Slovak problem is less Czech than Hungarian (1,000 years of domination). When the Hungarian prime minister declared that he considers himself the spokesman for 15 million Hungarians while there are only 10 million of them in Hungary, it falls on anxious ears in Bratislava, the old capital of Hungary. When in the summer of 1991 he said about Voivodina (where a Hungarian minority lives) that in 1920 it was given to Yugoslavia and not to Serbia, it is a way of saying that if Yugoslavia is no more, everything is up for renegotiation. Even the most independent-minded Slovaks have to recognize that if Czechoslovakia disappears, Slovakia will be in a very bad position: a state without guaranteed borders, with a population of 5 million, of which 650,000 are Hungarians, who show no deep love for a Slovak state. Given the looming economic disaster and the Hungarian question, it is hardly surprising that Slovaks are having second thoughts, and feel they are being dragged into a separation rife with potential dangers. They may yet resist fully taking the plunge.

JACQUES RUPNIK is a professor at the Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques in Paris. This article was translated by Anna Husarska.

Life in the Naval Academy.

DAMES AT SEA

By Carol Burke

Reflecting on the much publicized Tailhook scandal, in which naval officers allegedly assaulted twenty-six women (several of them fellow officers), I recalled a lovely cool September morning in 1984 during the first semester of my seven-year tenure teaching at the Naval Academy. To a civilian whose only connection to the military was an old photograph of my father in a World War II uniform, the place was spectacularly impressive: the Severn in the distance, glassy and still; the gray stone buildings, massive and proud; the grounds a deep green even after a dry summer; and the orderly rows of ginkgoes fanning their gold leaves in unison. As I walked to Sampson Hall, the oldest building on the yard, I heard the approach of a group of midshipmen, running in formation and chanting in guttural tones: "Rape, Maim, Kill Babies. Rape, Maim, Kill Babies, Oorah!"

Marching chants ("cadence calls," as they are referred to in the Navy, "jodies" in the Army), along with the drill they accompany, help inculcate—often with a dose of irony—a strong, corporate identity. Typically, they oppose the longing for loved ones with the celebration of a new life as a member of the group. In cadence calls, a kind of early white version of rap music, trainees sing of the unfaithful girls they've left behind: "Ain't no use in goin' home, / Jody's got your girl and gone." But they also talk of compensation for such loss: "I don't want no teenage queen. / I just want my M-16." Cadence calls not only instill mutual solidarity but res-

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Confused About School Choice?

BY ALBERT SHANKER, PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

"Eager to Please, Bush Gets Facts Wrong," was the *International Herald Tribune's* headline about President Bush's misrepresentation of his voucher plan to a Catholic school audience in Philadelphia last week.

When the President told a sympathetic gathering about his plan—which would give $1000 for tuition to students attending private or parochial schools—he assured them several times that the program was not tied to income. He told a mother of eight that no families would be excluded from the program: "This program that we're talking about today, there is no means testing. A family like yours would be covered." But a means test is basic to the proposal the President calls the "centerpiece" of his domestic program. And as his aides later admitted, the vouchers would be available only to families earning under about $40,000.

The President also neglected to point out how limited the program is in scope. Though he compared it to the GI bill, which was available to all veterans, his program would make vouchers available to a very small percentage of students—500,000 in all. So that if all the eligible students in Philadelphia, where Mr. Bush was speaking, got a voucher, one-third of the funds for the entire country would be exhausted.

School choice sounds so simple, but it isn't. Even President Bush doesn't understand his own choice program. Recently, he proposed this $500-million, means-tested program that would give $1000 vouchers to 500,000 students—some already in private and parochial schools and some in public schools—to help pay their private school tuition. (Five-hundred-dollar vouchers could go to kids who stayed in public school though how this would work is a mystery.)

But in Philadelphia on Monday, President Bush seemed to promise the $1000 to *all* the kids currently in private schools, no matter what their family income. That would be a $4- to $5-billion program before a single cent went to students now in public schools. If a substantial number of public school students took advantage of the program, the cost would escalate by additional billions of dollars. This would be a huge infusion of federal dollars into education, but would it improve education? What are some of the likely consequences? How would parents exercise choice? There's no evidence that the President understands what his program would cost or that he has looked for answers to any of these questions about what choice would achieve.

The President doesn't seem to know what vouchers would cost or that there's no evidence they would improve education.

A good place to find answers to these and other questions is the June 1992 issue of the journal *Educational Policy*. The entire issue is devoted to articles by seven authors with differing views on school choice. I recommend it highly to those who want to go beyond simplistic slogans and political pronouncements.

One of the authors, John Witte, a political scientist who teaches at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, provides a broad examination of "Public Subsidies for Private Schools." Witte, who favors careful experimentation with choice, offers an excellent review of the claim that private and parochial schools do a better job than public schools. Describing an influential study which concluded that private schools were superior because private school students were able to answer one or two more questions on a 115-item test than kids in public schools, Witte asks "whether it makes sense to consider overturning our existing education system" for a gain as trivial as that. His review of research on the question concludes that "superior" private school results are minuscule and not worth taking seriously.

Another article, by Geoffrey Walford of Aston University, Birmingham, England, deals with "Educational Choice and Equity in Great Britain." Walford makes a number of important points. For example, he says that, unless you're in a baby-bust period where there are plenty of empty school seats, choice will result in a large number of applications for a small number of available seats. It is the schools, not the parents, that will get to choose.

Walford also talks about the effect school choice has had on "bad" schools in Great Britain and on the kids who still go there: "Well-motivated parents and children were able to opt out of local working-class schools because they saw them as undesirable, but by doing so, they ensured that their judgment was likely to become a reality for those children who remained."

When parents take their kids out of "bad" schools and send them to "good" schools, what criteria will they use to determine what is good and bad? Walford cites research that found "the positive factor mentioned most frequently (when not prompted) was that the *child* wanted to go to a particular school"—and these were 10-year-olds making the choice. Parents were also asked "why they thought their child wanted to go to a particular school. The most important reason was simply that the child wished to go to the same school as his or her friends or relations. Other reasons given were the good sports facilities, its convenient location or because it was single sex. None mentioned academic reasons."

President Bush is trying to sweet-talk parents with his offers of public money to every child who wants to go to private or parochial school. He doesn't seem to know that the cost of vouchers would be astronomical or that there's not a shred of evidence they would improve education.

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urrect the Casey Jones of American ballad tradition as a brave fighter pilot who survives the crash of his plane only to subdue women with greater ferocity:

Climbed all out with his dick in his hand.
Said, "Looky here, ladies, I'm a hell of a man."

Went to his room and lined up a hundred . . .
Swore up and down he'd fuck everyone.

Fucked ninety-eight till his balls turned blue.
Then he backed off, jacked off, and fucked the other two.

Sadomasochistic cadence calls have increased since women entered the brigade of midshipmen in 1976. A version of the traditional song "The Prettiest Girl" portrays a woman appreciative of the violence she receives at the hands of a midshipman:

The ugliest girl I ever did see
was beatin' her face against a tree.

I picked her up; I punched her twice.
She said, "Oh, Middy, you're much too nice."

In the necrophilic chant "My Girl Is a Vegetable," midshipmen celebrate sex with a comatose girlfriend:

My girl's a vegetable
She lives in a hospital.

(chorus)

I'll do most everything
To keep her alive.

My girl's a paraplegic.
Making love is so strategic.

(chorus)

My girl ain't got no eyes.
Just two sockets full o' flies.

(chorus)

Sometimes I even play a joke,
Pull the plugs and watch her choke.

Other Naval Academy practices celebrate violence toward women with the same gusto. Members of the Male Glee Club, a group of ambassadors for the Naval Academy, entertain themselves on bus trips home with a lurid variation of the popular song "The Candy Man":

The S&M Man

Who can take a chain saw,
Cut the bitch in two,
Fuck the bottom half
and give the upper half to you . . .

The S&M Man, the S&M Man
The S&M Man cause he mixes it with love
and makes the hurt feel good!

Who can take a bicycle,
Then take off the seat,
Set his girlfriend on it
Ride her down a bumpy street . . .

Who can take an ice pick
Ram it through her ear
Ride her like a Harley,
As you fuck her from the rear . . .

Although a large number of commissioned officers receive their training at Officer Candidate School and at several naval ROTC programs on college campuses, the midshipmen, the faculty, and the administration of the Naval Academy generally believe that it is the academy that "sets the standard for the Fleet." The institution's undergraduate regimen of rigorous academic studies, strenuous athletics, and confrontational leadership training produces, according to most members of the academy community, officers best qualified to assume the Navy's top positions, as indeed most of them do.

In the 1870s Congress condemned as hazing the assumption of authority on the part of upperclassmen at the Naval Academy to physically abuse or verbally humiliate underclassmen. Despite congressional condemnation, physical abuse continued in the form of ritual paddlings and demeaning practices like the game of "Cuckoo Clock," in which a plebe was ordered to crouch under a table and stick his head out as fast as he could saying, "Cuckoo," before being swatted with a newspaper by hovering upperclassmen.

A "no touching" rule was finally enacted two years ago, and physical abuse has dramatically lessened. But routine verbal insults continue through a system known as "Plebe Indoctrination." A freshman who has failed to memorize one item on the day's menu must submit to the public verbal abuse of an upperclassman. For example, the upperclassman may yell, "You aren't worth a piece of dirt on my shoe," to which the plebe will respond in one of only four permissible responses: Yes, Sir. No, Sir. No excuse, Sir. I'll find out, Sir. Those upperclassmen who delight in applying this humiliation day after day are known as "flamers"; their victims as "shit screens."

Women students at the Naval Academy face the same indignities during their plebe year as do their male counterparts. But they must learn to cope with more virulent forms of ridicule deeply rooted in Naval Academy traditions. On Sunday nights each company awards "the brick" to the midshipman whose date (or "drag," in academy jargon) is judged the ugliest of the weekend. After "Pig Pushes" (dances to which girls from private schools in the Baltimore and Philadelphia areas are bussed), the midshipman who dances with "the biggest pig" wins a pool of money collected from his fellow company members. On the dance floor, a midshipman may rub his fingers and thumb together behind the back of his partner, signifying his eagerness to claim the winnings at the end of the evening.

Periodically a "Hog Log" is maintained by midshipmen working in the main office where a visiting date

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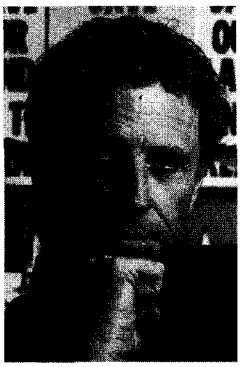

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"The most dangerous man in America" needs your help

Who calls him that? The Ku Klux Klan, the White Aryan Resistance, American neo-Nazis, and more than 300 hate groups actively promoting violence against blacks, Jews, Hispanics, Asians, gays, and anyone else who opposes them. His name is Morris Dees. You may have learned about him on television. Now read why these hate groups hate him so much, and how you can join his crusade to fight them in our courts and to teach tolerance in our schools.

ONE NIGHT the Klan firebombed his headquarters building in Montgomery, Alabama, and nearly burned it to the ground.

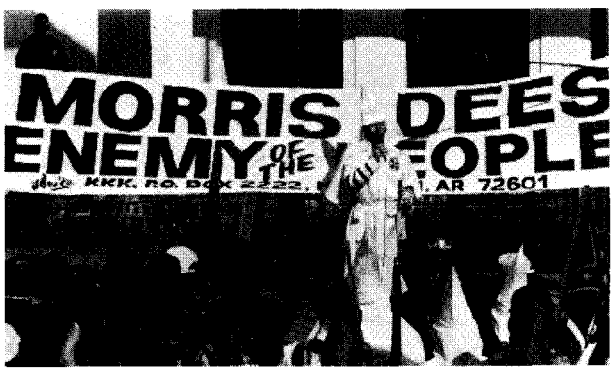
Another night, they hid with guns behind bushes near his home and tried to assassinate him.

He's the man the hate groups hate the most—Morris Dees, co-founder and the Chief Trial Counsel at The Southern Poverty Law Center.

Why do they hate him? Because he takes them to court and holds them financially accountable for the violent acts of their members. He poses a threat to their very existence as organized groups.

Now they have even more reason to hate him. He wants to deprive them of their most powerful weapons — ignorance and intolerance.

He has started a remarkable new education project called "Teaching Tolerance". It is designed to give teachers the tools they need to teach students to reject racial prejudice, ethnic bias, and all other forms of intolerance. The Center plans to distribute millions of dollars worth of tolerance education materials free of charge to schools across America.



Banner denouncing Morris Dees displayed at Klan rally in Montgomery, Alabama, in 1991.

On the legal front, he thinks it's not enough just to have law enforcement authorities find, convict, and jail individual members of hate groups for crimes of violence against minorities (although he's helped in that, too).

He believes you've got to go after the ringleaders who stay safely in the background and egg on their thuggish members. Hit them with a civil suit. Turn over every nickel won to the victims and their families. Take every penny the hatemongers may get in the future so they can't afford to propagandize and recruit. *Don't just put them in jail — put them out of business!*

And that's exactly what the Center's legal strike force has done, again and again.

Courtroom Victories

- They bankrupted the United Klans of America by winning a $7 million judgment against them for lynching a black youth in Mobile, Alabama. This was the first time a Klan group had been held liable by a jury for the violent acts of its members.
- They won a $12.5 million jury verdict in Portland, Oregon against two white supremacist leaders, their White Aryan Resistance (W.A.R.) group, and their Skinhead allies for the brutal murder of a black man.
- They got a $940,000 judgment in Georgia against two racist groups and ten Klansmen for attacking peaceful marchers honoring Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday.
- They won federal court rulings outlawing Klan paramilitary activity in North Carolina, Alabama, and Texas.

But the job never ends. There is not just one Klan, one White Supremacy group, one neo-Nazi gang to deal with. New hate groups keep springing up like poisonous weeds in the fertile soil of social change and economic discontent.

The Center's *Klanwatch* division operates the nation's most comprehensive intelligence-gathering on hate group activity and makes this data available to federal, state, and local authorities. *Klanwatch* reports that there are today at least *three hundred* active hate groups spewing out their poisonous propaganda.

Because of these groups, the rate of physical assaults on minorities and those who support equal rights is steadily rising. Incidents of violent hate crimes have risen sharply in each of the past four years.

To fight this trend, the Center needs all the help it can get from people like you. Center lawyers take no fees. Their clients pay no trial expenses. Every cent collected in court judgments goes directly to the victims or their families.

A New Idea: The Teaching Tolerance Project

So if your blood boils when you read in the newspaper or see on television news about people getting beaten, stabbed, or shot because they are of the "wrong" color, race, religion, or sexual preference ...or about fiery crosses ignited in the dead of night on somebody's front lawn...or about crude swastikas painted on a synagogue door or a gravestone...

...here's your chance to fight back.

By supporting the work of the Center, you'll also be fighting back through their new Teaching Tolerance Project. Twice a year, the Center sends teachers across America a free copy of *Teaching Tolerance,* an educational journal designed to help introduce the teaching of tolerance into classrooms.

An Impressive Record

"Morris Dees has put his life on the line again and again...No soldier has ever been braver, more honorable and more patriotic than Morris Dees."
— Kurt Vonnegut

"By any measure one of the most dedicated and effective civil rights lawyers in U.S. history."
— Coretta Scott King

"One of America's great lawyers...a brilliant... extraordinary American."
— Larry King, television and radio talk-show host

"The Teaching Tolerance Project is of great value to educators of all grades and subjects."
— Keith Geiger, President National Education Association

"The Southern Poverty Law Center does an excellent job of alerting the public to right-wing hatemongers."
— Arthur E. Gerringer, Investigator, District Attorney's Office, 35th Judicial District of Texas

The Center is also creating special teacher's kits with videos, teacher's guides and tolerance activities for students. These kits, too, are sent free to teachers who request them.

Please clip the form below and send it to the Center with whatever donation you can afford.

Your dollars will go to work fighting hate groups in America and in launching the new Teaching Tolerance Project for schools. You will be kept closely informed on what your aid is accomplishing.

If you prefer, call us with your pledge.

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I want to support your efforts to expose and monitor hate groups and to hold them accountable in court for crimes of violence. Also, I'd like to help with the new Teaching Tolerance Project for schools. I enclose my tax-deductible gift of:

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checks in and awaits the midshipman who has invited her. Should a visitor be branded as unattractive, her name is entered in the "Hog Log." In recent years officials have banned such practices, yet many of them continue unofficially in the Hall, where upperclassmen exercise casual intimidation and midshipmen are reluctant to incriminate one another.

Although upperclass male and female students may date during leave hours, a male midshipman known to be dating a female midshipman may be "branded" by the rest of his company. In this ceremony his pants are pulled down and a "W" (for WUBA) "branded" with boot blacking on his buttocks. The acronym WUBA was first used in 1976 to describe the freshly issued uniforms of the first female midshipmen: Women's Uniform Blue Alpha. The expression began to appear in misogynist graffiti ("WUBA Go Home!"); as jokes slipped into productions of The Masqueraders, the academy drama group; and as offensive catcalls. Although censored, the expression enjoys wide currency today at the Naval Academy, sometimes jokingly said to stand for "Women Used By All." WUBA jokes circulate quickly among the brigade of midshipmen:

How are a WUBA and a bowling ball similar?
You pick them up, put three fingers in them, and throw them in the gutter.

What do you call a mid who fucks a WUBA?
Too lazy to beat off.

What's the difference between a WUBA and a warthog?
About 200 pounds, but the WUBA has more hair.

The majority of the male student body stigmatizes women midshipmen as overweight and promiscuous. Ironically, with the intensive physical regimen required of all students, an overweight midshipman, male or female, is rare. When any students exceed their approved weight by a few pounds, they find their names and excess pounds posted on company bulletin boards. To many civilian faculty and outsiders, female midshipmen seem underweight.

Male midshipmen learn early that there are two sets of insignia to be earned: one based on military performance, the other on masculine prowess. They sport Chiquita and Dole banana stickers on the insides of their hats to mark each time they have had sex with a date on academy grounds. The Chiquita sticker signifies "scoring" in one's room; the Dole sticker, anywhere on the grounds.

Earning one's "brown wings" is common parlance for having engaged in anal intercourse with a woman. One female freshman complained of the sexist E-mail she and other women received almost nightly by anonymous midshipmen, including verses like the following:

I love my woman dearly
We get together yearly
And although she said it stings
I still earned my brown wings.

Women at the Naval Academy learn to accept silently what many view as intimidation. Like their male counterparts, they quickly learn that complaining of mistreatment is viewed as a sign of weakness and draws unwanted attention to them. Their immediate supervisors, upperclassmen who have themselves withstood humiliating abuse and whose job it is to test these recruits daily, favor those who stoically withstand interrogation and intimidation.

An informal group calling themselves "Webbites" shamelessly practices bigotry. Adherents of James Webb, former secretary of the Navy who in a visit to the Naval Academy several years ago referred to female midshipmen as "Thunder Thighs," this group has evolved over the past decade from a collection of outspoken critics of women in the military to a secret society, one that in 1991 referred to itself as the "WUBA KLUX KLAN" and solicited new members to further its goal of ridding the Naval Academy of women. Female midshipmen know that they may someday be required to serve under a former "Webbite" or that their commanding officer may be a member of the last class at the Naval Academy to graduate with no women, a class in which several members inscribed on their class rings "LCWB" (Last Class With Balls).

In response to widely publicized discrimination, the Navy has adopted the philosophy that although it cannot change the way people think, it can regulate behavior by identifying and proscribing all forms of sexist and racist behavior. There is little evidence that such regulations have produced the desired effect. As long as high-ranking officers wink at humiliating rituals and spontaneous acts of debasement, as long as they accept these as inevitable pranksterism (or "high jinks," as Admiral Virgil Hill referred to the handcuffing of a female midshipman to a urinal), such behavior will continue, if not as an expression of the fighter/jock ethos fueled at the Tailhook convention, then as other forms of abjection. We have a right to demand of the Navy and of its premier institution, the Naval Academy, a basic standard of decency, one we expect of all public institutions in a democratic society.

In a recent interview, J. Daniel Howard, undersecretary of the Navy, declared, "Americans don't want a naval officer to behave like just any person in society. They expect a higher standard of behavior." In fact, when we insist that assailants be prosecuted, we invoke no "higher standard of behavior." When we condemn those who witness a crime but fail even to notify police, we demand no superior moral standard than the decency and responsibility that come with citizenship. What happened at the Tailhook reunion was both traditional and criminal. Although a thorough criminal investigation may identify the perpetrators and others who sought to inhibit an investigation, the deep-rooted misogynistic traditions that breed such behavior will be harder to uproot.

CAROL BURKE is an associate dean at Johns Hopkins University.

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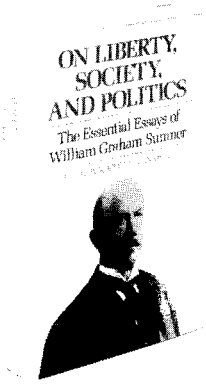

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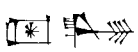

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Is nostalgia wrecking baseball?

FIELD OF KITSCH

By Nicholas Dawidoff

I have seen baseball's past and it is in Baltimore, at Oriole Park at Camden Yards, the new $105.4 million ballpark where the local nine—the Orioles—are now in residence. Its predecessor, Memorial Stadium, was a nice enough and generally self-effacing spot for a ballgame. Camden Yards, on the other hand, promises to do for baseball stadiums what prewashing did for bluejeans.

Until quite recently, modern ballparks were notable for their retractable domed roofing, their synthetic sod and plastic seats, their sushi bars and Evian stands. But America, it turned out, craved something else entirely. Fans were wistful for ballparks where the ceiling is the stars, the grass grows, and peanut shells crackle under your feet. So after touring cities like Boston and Chicago, where the ballparks are old and the vendors hawk hot dogs, not veggie burgers, Baltimore's stadium design team obliged with an instant antique.

Camden Yards has all you might expect from a dowager ballpark, including an asymmetrical outfield, intimate porches, a red brick facade, 1920s Coca-Cola ads, ushers wearing bow ties and suspenders, and ornithologically correct aluminum "weather" orioles nesting atop the scoreboard. I have it on good authority that old-time baseball trivia is piped into the women's restrooms. For backdrop, a gone-to-seed 1898 warehouse beyond the right field fence has been completely restored (it houses no wares and has been converted into a tony office building). This is, in short, the temple of retroball, a place, says *New York Times* architecture critic Paul Goldberger, "capable of wiping out in a single gesture fifty years of wretched stadium design." Unfortunately, visitors to Camden Yards may be distracted by a flaw that hasn't troubled the denizens of Boston's Fenway Park (1912) or Chicago's Wrigley Field (1914): from many of its spanking old slatted wooden seats, you can't see much of the field.

Which is the problem. The beatification of baseball's past and the consequent miasma of woolly commentary, mawkish sentiment, and cardboard portraits coveted—and priced—like Tintorettos is becoming more than a cultural fad. Partly in response, no doubt, to our increasingly fractured and fracturing society, a national pastime that has existed for the near breadth of our history is being turned into a social balm—and is being embalmed at the same time. Indeed, America is so swamped in baseball nostalgia that the game threatens to be obscured by a cloud of kitsch.

In the late 1980s baseball memorabilia first achieved truly stratospheric price levels. Unlike real estate prices, they haven't dropped much since. The baseball Babe Ruth supposedly swatted for his sixtieth home run in 1927 just sold for $200,000 in San Francisco, and a flannel uniform shirt once worn by Mickey Mantle cost a reasonably sane-looking gentleman $111,000 in New York. ("Give him the pants," someone in the audience bellowed when that deal was struck.) Baseball cards, which were once the passion of 10-year-olds, are now a serious commodity. The rarest of cards, a 1909 Honus Wagner, sold for $451,000 last year. More common stock, like a 1952 Mickey Mantle, goes for $30,000. Card shows are spiced by the appearance of a "legend," old ballplayers like Ted Williams or Joe DiMaggio, who are hauled in for a few hours to sign anything put in front of them by long lines of people who have paid $50 to $100 for the privilege.

Many fans today seem disaffected with contemporary Major Leaguers who routinely command multimillion-dollar contracts. Instead, they prefer to travel vast distances and spend large sums of their own to commune with men who hit and threw balls forty years ago. This coming winter, for $1,295, aficionados of the 1951 National League pennant race may sprawl on deck chairs on a cruise to Bermuda, within suntan-lotion-sniffing distance of the heroes of that autumn, ex-Giant Bobby Thomson and former Dodger Ralph Branca.

This obsessive nostalgia is now permeating the broadest reaches of popular culture. Besides the glut of mainstream baseball history movies (*Eight Men Out, Field of Dreams, The Babe, A League of Their Own*), Ken Burns is following up "The Civil War" with a documentary history of baseball, due out in two years. American audiences have recently been treated to professional productions of an old-time baseball ballet in Pennsylvania, an opera in New York, and plays in Chicago, Boston, and off-Broadway. On the front of the current Wheaties box, you'll see the face of Lou Gehrig, who died in 1941. There is a Nellie Fox Society in Chicago, a Burleigh Grimes museum in Wisconsin, and a Dizzy Dean Museum is thriving in Mississippi. The National Baseball Museum in the snug hamlet of Cooperstown, New York, had 373,793 visitors last year (compared with the 253,917 who went to the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York City). Just eight years ago only half that many made it to Cooperstown.

"Old Timers Games," painful exercises in which aged pros of summers long past gather in their knee breeches for a less-than-brisk three innings, have been gaining steadily in popularity. The idea of observing 61-year-old Willie Mays tottering after a pop fly or a 71-year-old Spec Shea serving up slowballs has proved so enticing to fans that every major league team now hosts an Old Timers Day. And so severe is baseball's case of progeria that next year, in their debut National League

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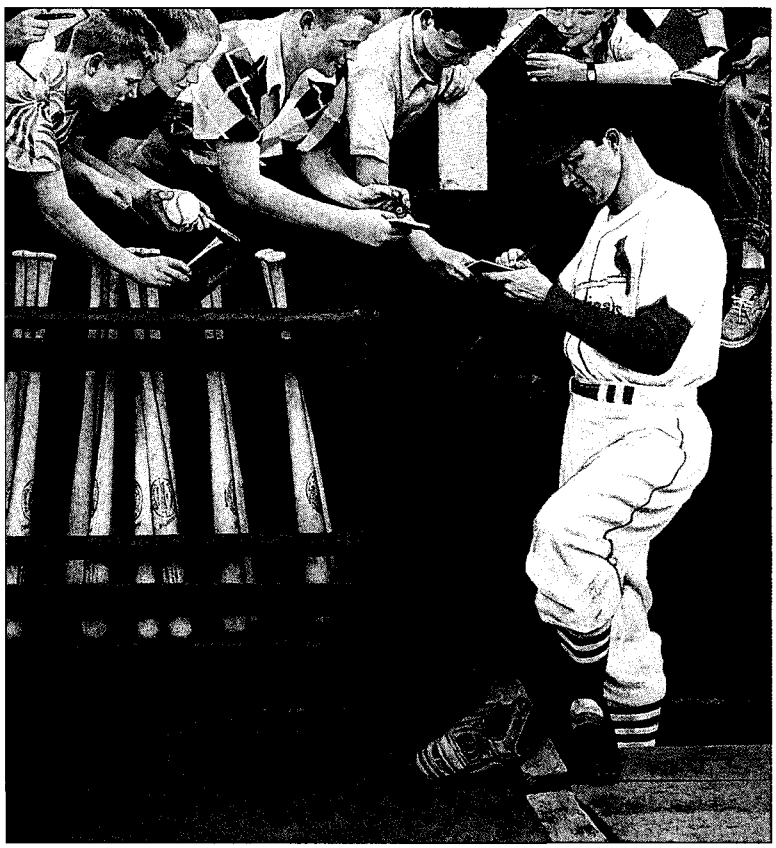
seasons, the expansion Miami Marlins and Colorado Rockies will have them too.

The stylish American recreation of the moment is pre-baseball baseball. Teams playing 1858-rules "town ball," which predated foul territory, used stakes rather than base sacks, and favored a soft, lumpy ball, are springing up around the country like dandelions in the outfield. And not long ago a warm-blooded collection of fanatics laced on their skates and took their swings (and their spills) on Mirror Lake in Lake Placid, just as Brooklynites did on the Capitoline Grounds back in the early 1860s, when baseball on ice was the rage. Indoors, meanwhile, on June 25, at U.S. District Court in Chicago, a group of prominent Illinois lawyers brandishing carefully overwrought summations staged a mock retrial of two of the notorious Chicago Black Sox, "Shoeless" Joe Jackson and Buck Weaver, who were banned from the pastime for allegedly consorting with gamblers to throw the 1919 World Series to the Cincinnati Reds. Both ballplayers were acquitted this time, despite the efforts of their prosecutor, Tom Foran, who had better luck with the Chicago Seven in 1969. (The illiterate Jackson's autograph, by the way, currently sells for $23,000, while Mozart's signature fetches a mere $2,500 and Michelangelo's but $2,250.)



STANLEY MUSIAL BY JOHN FALTER
SATURDAY EVENING POST COVER, MAY 1, 1954

Apparently the word in publishing is that if it's about baseball, it sells, even if it reads as a dirt road drives just after a hurricane. Recent additions to the burgeoning baseball stock at my local bookshop include volumes investigating the premature deaths of "Big" Ed Delahanty (a slugger who disappeared from a train above Niagara Falls in 1903) and Ray Chapman (struck and killed by a fastball in 1920). *Green Cathedrals*, *Lost Ballparks*, and *To Every Thing A Season* are fresh dirges for old stadiums. *Our Game*, *Baseball: The People's Game* and *America's National Game* each lends its own spin to the saga of the early days. *Diamonds Are Forever* is the title of a catalog for a multimedia exhibition of backward-looking baseball art (well, some of it was art) that was displayed at the Houston Museum, the New York Public Library, and, among other places, at Cincinnati's Contemporary Art Center, where it spent as many days as Robert Mapplethorpe's photographs. Baseball's past is available on audiotape too, from a Connecticut company offering broadcasts of 1,000 different old ballgames at $13.95 a reel.

Vintage baseball attire is likewise in vogue. A man I know makes a reasonable living sewing antiquated baseball caps to order in the old cheese house behind his home in upstate New York. Major League Baseball is marketing a Cooperstown Collection, mass-produced souvenirs for defunct teams such as the St. Louis Browns and the Washington Senators, items that appear destined to make those teams more popular now than when they existed. Not to be outdone, some of the surviving franchises such as the Philadelphia Phillies and the Atlanta Braves are playing today in 1950s-style uniforms. Meanwhile, to complete the baseball outfit of today, a company in Nocona, Texas, manufactures 1930s-model baseball gloves and, for an extra fee, is willing to silkscreen an old ballpark such as Ebbets Field in Brooklyn onto the leather.

This surfeit of baseball nostalgia would be harmless, of course, if it didn't obscure the real pleasures of the game. But baseball, the game, faces twin dangers in the 1990s: of being turned into an instant televised entertainment and a homogenized nostalgic syrup. Both processes corrupt baseball's essence. Unlike radio, which follows the natural pace of the game, the television camera decides what image you will see while the announcer tells you what to think about it. In its constant striving for attention, television brooks no perspective but its own. Unlike football, basketball, or hockey, baseball has no time clock hurrying the conclusion. Its natural rhythms and pauses do not easily correspond to advertising intervals or to frenetic MTV-style coverage. And it's these pauses that offer the observer's imagination the opportunity to knead what is seen so that an individual experience is carried home.

Similarly, baseball nostalgia undermines the authentic appreciation of a great game. It deprives the mem-

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ory, flattens the past, and makes it generic rather than personal. It turns real memories into folklore; genuine stories into a design style; a real old stadium into an instantly aged contrivance. And nostalgia undermines the true pleasures of baseball in a more obvious way as well. Old Timers games, baseball cards, and the rest are being taken for baseball when they are not that, but ancillary and vastly inferior games of their own, barnacles coating the hull of a handsome ship.

With luck, of course, the nostalgia craze may subside, along with our short attention span and current spasm of national insecurity. Just a few years ago the vagaries of style were skewed in the opposite direction. The 1970s were notable on the diamond for a forward-looking approach to baseball: three-D baseball cards; white shoes; cookie-cutter concrete ballparks; waves in the stands; hyperelectronics on the scoreboard; golf carts in the bullpen; avant-garde uniforms featuring day-glo colors, and for the Chicago White Sox, a fleeting fancy—shorts. Baseball tolerates these permutations because they are peripheral. The game itself really doesn't change very much.

Already there are faint signs that some people are forgetting how to remember. Barry Bonds, the Pittsburgh Pirates' young left fielder and the son of Bobby Bonds, a fourteen-year major leaguer, took in the Old Timers game held the day before the All Star game in San Diego. The sight of Hall-of-Famers Bob Gibson and Bob Feller pitching to the likes of Ernie Banks and Reggie Jackson left him unimpressed. "I don't know anything about this history stuff," Barry sniffed afterward. "I failed history class."

NICHOLAS DAWIDOFF, a special contributor at *Sports Illustrated*, is writing a biography of Moe Berg.

America confronts the post-cold war world.

THE BEGINNING OF FOREIGN POLICY

By Francis Fukuyama

Remember foreign policy? Ten years ago Republicans and Democrats hurled invective at each other over throw-weights and death squads. Today, judging by the campaign rhetoric, the world is bounded by Normandie Avenue in Los Angeles to the west, Kennebunkport to the east, and Mexico to the south, that vast suburb of El Paso to which all American jobs are now fleeing. This strange, sudden quiescence in the foreign policy debate is caused, of course, by the collapse of communism and the end of an ideological struggle over how America should interact with the rest of the world. But that same event also multiplied the number of options the United States now has. Suddenly we have calls to make all over the globe—from Croatia to Burma to Haiti—with no safe ideological compass to guide us. We have yet to formulate a clear and reliable answer to a pressing international question: What should be the principles that guide us in intervention abroad—and how can they combine the realism needed for a newly unstable world with the idealism that Americans demand of their statecraft?

FRANCIS FUKUYAMA is a resident consultant at the RAND Corporation and the author of *The End of History and the Last Man* (Free Press).

The choice is not, mercifully, between isolationism and internationalism. President Bush was criticized by many Democrats last winter for being too concerned with foreign affairs at the expense of "average Americans" at home. But this was merely political opportunism. The Democratic nominee, Bill Clinton, in his first major foreign policy address on April 1, clearly opted in favor of internationalism by attacking the administration for being too cautious in its support for democracy in Russia, and reiterating calls for American global leadership. Isolationism was raised in the primaries only by Pat Buchanan, but his candidacy soon fizzled, and there was little evidence that his support was based on his isolationism rather than his opposition to taxes. Bob Kerrey and Tom Harkin, the Democrats who tried to make protectionism a campaign issue, went down to early and ignominious defeat.

The real debate over national security strategy lies elsewhere. It concerns not whether to be internationally involved but the *manner* of involvement, and resurrects some very old dichotomies in American foreign policy. At one pole are the "hyper-realists," who believe that international life is the relentless, amoral clash of national interests and that America should be guided by mere balance-of-power considerations. Although Henry Kissinger is the most articulate theorist of hyper-realism,

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Bush's solicitousness of the aging Communists in Beijing and his pullback from full victory in Iraq are perhaps the best examples of hyper-realism in practice. At the other extreme are "neo-Wilsonians," who, particularly in light of the recent democratic revolutions around the world, believe that democracy and respect for human rights ought to be the central theme of U.S. policy. This group encompasses a large swath of the Democratic Party.

Both hyper-realism and neo-Wilsonianism are, by themselves, wrong and inadequate as the basis for any future U.S. foreign policy. Any successful post-cold war policy will have to thread its way between an overly brutal realpolitik and an unworkable idealism. Realists will have to begin dealing with those unglamorous issues of economic development and institution-building that will preoccupy the democratic and capitalist part of the world; idealists will have to learn to be more tough-minded in their pursuit of human rights.

The realist position has been advanced forcefully in recent months by its most famous American practitioner, Kissinger. He has been utterly consistent throughout his career in arguing for a foreign policy based not on ideology but on unsentimental considerations of power. The international system, in his view, is a permanently dangerous and conflictual one in which all nations, regardless of ideology, are driven to assert themselves on the international stage. The remedy is neither international law nor the spread of democratic legitimacy, but the age-old game of balance of power.

While secretary of state in the 1970s, Kissinger warned that "today, for the first time in our history, we face the stark reality that the [Communist] challenge is unending." He has more recently argued in *The Washington Post* that Yeltsin's Russia, despite its newfound enthusiasm for democracy and markets, will not be able to overcome its 400-year legacy of imperialism and expansion. He has opposed providing substantial Western aid to Russia, arguing that the Russian economy will be a bottomless pit, and that therefore the United States and other Western countries would be powerless to build either democracy or free markets there. He is skeptical about the rootedness of democracy in the former Soviet Union, and questions whether even a "democrat" like Yeltsin will be able to abide the permanent loss of Ukraine.

Kissinger's realism has very clear-cut implications for American policy. Russia will inevitably inherit the imperialist legacy of the former Soviet Union; we must therefore invest in those countries most immediately threatened by a resurgent Russia, where democracy has a better chance of consolidating. The result will be the eventual reconstruction of a NATO encircling Russia, which includes parts of Eastern Europe, perhaps the Baltics and Ukraine. An unstated but important consequence of a neo-NATO would be the containment of Germany in a restrictive alliance structure, since by realist premises the newly reunited Germany should pose as large a long-term threat to world security as a fractured and economically shattered Russia.

The application of Kissingerian realism is evident on the other side of the globe as well. Kissinger has made no secret of his belief that the United States must keep its strategic alliance with China in the wake of the Tiananmen Square massacre; he was one of the first prominent Americans to visit Beijing thereafter in the fall of 1989. He has argued that in the long run Japan and not China will be the expansionist threat, and that a U.S.-Chinese strategic partnership is necessary to contain not so much Russia but rather an economically and perhaps militarily dominant Tokyo. The fact that Japan has been a stable democracy and an all-important capitalist trading partner since 1945, and that the Communist regime in Beijing had just gotten through crushing the Chinese students' model of the Statue of Liberty under tank treads, counts for less than their underlying power positions in the global system. This is as stark and consistent an application of realist principles as one could imagine.

But this sort of hyper-realism ignores the reality of the vast changes that have swept the world in the second half of the twentieth century. Liberal democracy is no longer a fragile and embattled outpost of humanity: today there are more than sixty nations, containing 2.2 billion people, or 40 percent of the world's population, that can claim to live under some form of democratic legitimacy. These figures, moreover, do not include the former Soviet Union or China, each of which is undergoing enormous change. The realists have been consistently surprised over the past generation as one seemingly immutable tyranny after another has self-destructed. The long-term trajectory of world politics in the direction of market-oriented democracy, noted by Tocqueville 160 years ago, will not be falsified by a Bosnia going up in flames, or a Peru lapsing back into dictatorship.

Kissinger implies that only a born-yesterday American would believe Russia could overcome its history of imperial expansion. But there are many precedents for countries with very long histories of imperialism giving up their empires. Turkey, Britain, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Portugal divested themselves of prior territorial acquisitions more or less voluntarily. And all of them did so in the twentieth century, which places the burden of proof on those who suggest that Russia will prove the exception to the general modern pattern of imperial divestment. Furthermore, Kissinger's view of Russia is an oddly academic one. It fails to take account of Russia's "post-Afghanistan syndrome," the real empire-weariness that characterizes even many conservative Russian nationalists. Democracy is far from consolidated in Russia, but whether Russia will be a threat to anyone but its immediate neighbors is not clear.

Kissinger's conviction that over time Japan will present a greater threat than China seems even more remote from reality, in light of the Miyazawa government's painful struggle to pass legislation permitting

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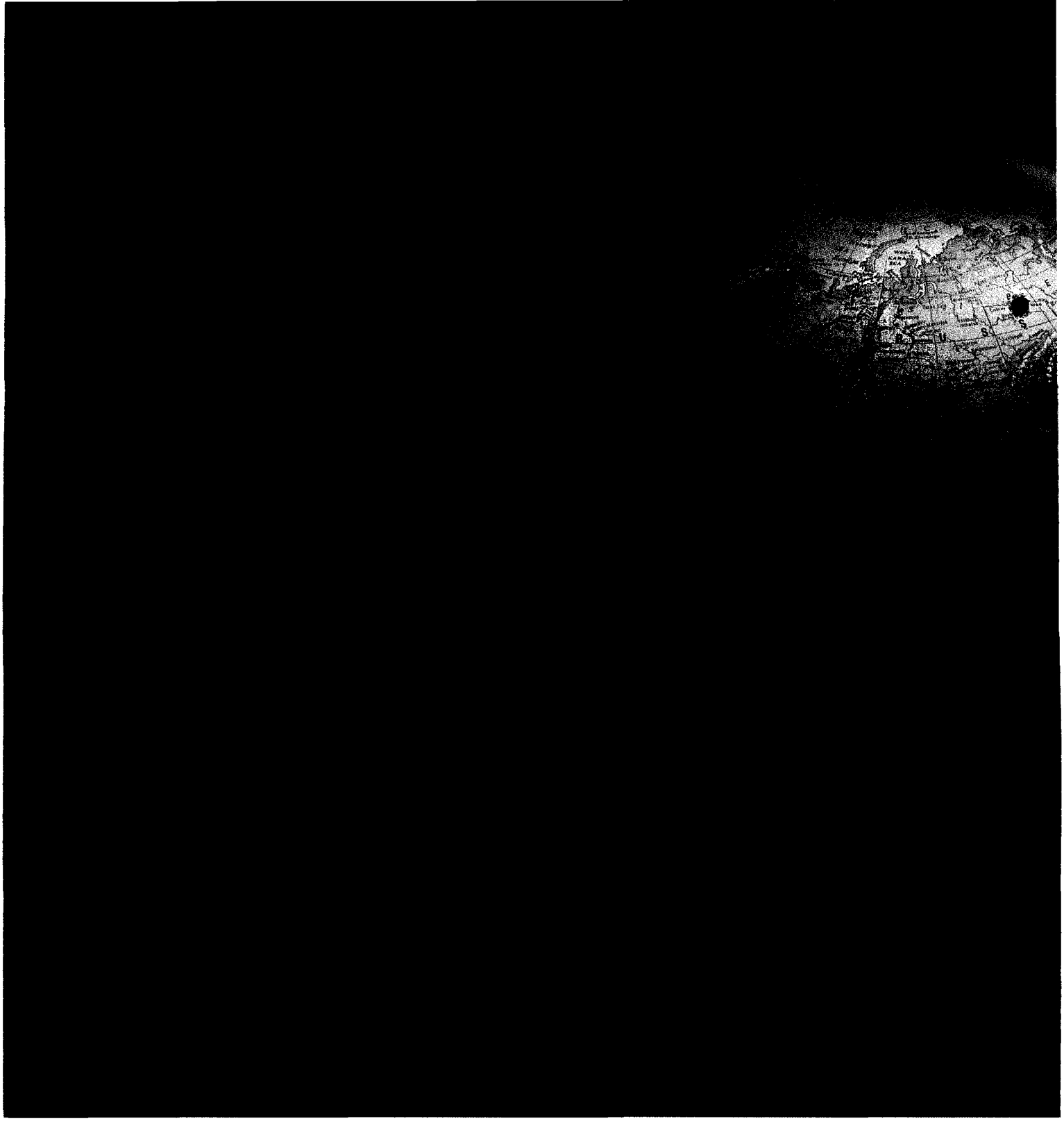

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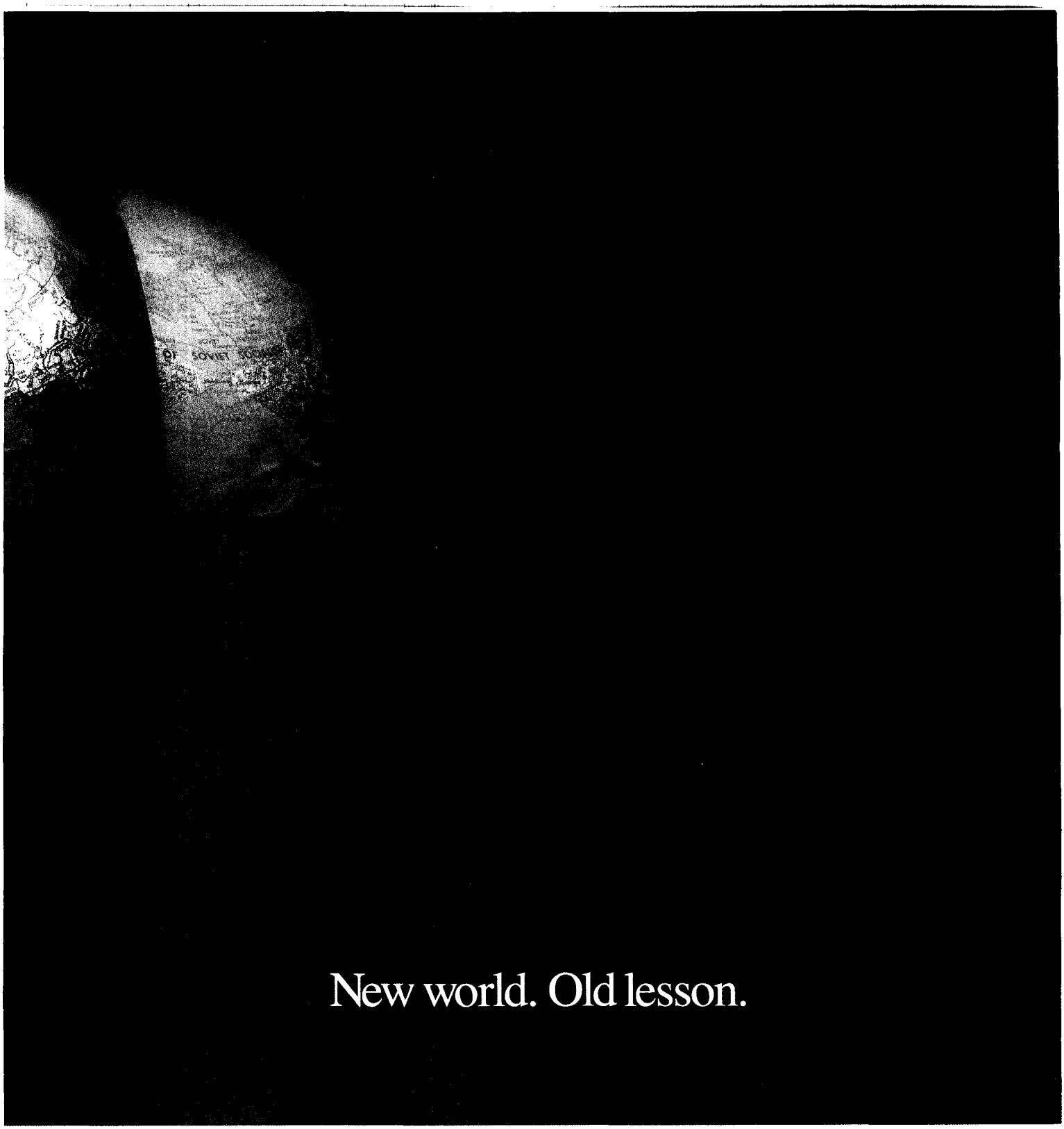

enterprise have prevailed after the long years of the cold war. And good reason, also, to remain strong in the future.

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the Japanese Self-Defense Forces to participate in U.N. peace-keeping operations. Japan, like Germany, has undergone a social embourgeoisement since 1945 that will be hard to shake. Hyper-realism, in other words, is not terribly realistic about the changing nature of modern states and the kinds of aspirations they entertain.

However satisfying hyper-realism may be as an abstract theory of world politics, its proponents have surely picked the wrong country in which to promulgate it. The United States is one of the few nations in the world that has virtually no national identity apart from the democratic institutions that defined it at its founding. It is therefore hard for administrations to build a solid consensus behind costly international policies on the basis of the amoral and often cynical calculations of power politics. When the Bush administration tried to make a case for the Gulf war on the perfectly understandable grounds that no hostile regional power should control a large part of Persian Gulf oil, it found itself retreating quickly in the face of demonstrators carrying placards reading "No blood for oil," and began to turn instead to justifications based on a more idealistic-sounding "new world order." The traditional moralism of U.S. foreign policy is frequently counterproductive and hypocritical, but a democratic majority of voters cannot be brought to support a strong internationalist role for America except on the basis of a "vision" higher than that of power politics.

At the other end of the spectrum are the neo-Wilsonians, who emphasize democracy, human rights, international law, and world bodies like the U.N. as organizing principles of world politics. Since the Second World War, Wilsonians have had a poor reputation among national security cognoscenti, having found it difficult, in the aftermath of twentieth-century totalitarianism, to shake the adjective "naive." And yet there are good reasons for examining aspects of the liberal internationalist legacy once again.

In sharp contrast to realists, neo-Wilsonians do not regard international relations as a remorseless struggle for power among nations. They believe instead that the advent of modern liberal democracy marks a break with the past because developed democracies are much less inclined to fight one another than authoritarian regimes—though democracies can certainly fight non-democracies. The nature of the regime, in other words, makes an enormous difference in the type of foreign policy a nation will choose; those that disregard the rights of their own citizens are much more likely to disregard the rights of neighboring countries as well. A modern liberal democracy may seek to expand its economic power or cultural sway, but it is inclined against the older forms of military imperialism. Although some academic realists assert that democracy makes no difference to a country's foreign policy, most of the more sophisticated ones, including Kissinger, would accept the fact that a democratic Russia will be easier to live with than a Stalinist or Russian nationalist one. The real difference between today's realists and neo-Wilsonians lies in their relative optimism about how likely it is that stable democracy around the world will last. Most realists believe the democratic revolutions in the former Soviet bloc are fragile and will give way, if they haven't done so already, to intolerant and aggressive nationalism.

Clinton placed himself squarely in the neo-Wilsonian camp by attacking the Bush administration for not having a "positive vision" in its foreign policy (read: no central emphasis on democratic values). Clinton's one major foreign policy speech—drowned out by Bush's announcement of a $24 billion aid package for the former USSR that same day—criticized the White House for being overly cautious in its support for democracy in the former Soviet Union, for "coddling" China's aging Communist rulers, and for cynically failing to protect the Kurds in the aftermath of the Gulf war. "No national security issue is more urgent," said Clinton, than "securing democracy's triumph around the world," particularly in the former Soviet empire; it is "time for America to lead a global alliance for democracy as united and steadfast as the global alliance that defeated communism."

Neo-Wilsonians do not correspond neatly to Democrats, however. The divide between them and the realists cuts directly across the old cold war divide between hawks and doves, and it makes current foreign policy discussions unpredictable and interesting. The Reagan administration was far more idealistic and Wilsonian than the Bush administration, which is staffed by several prominent Kissinger protégés, such as Brent Scowcroft and Lawrence Eagleburger. But conservative neo-Wilsonians such as Joshua Muravchik and Charles Krauthammer have separated support for democracy from reliance on international law. Krauthammer in particular has stressed the advantages of a unipolar world in which the United States is the dominant military power. He accepts collaboration with like-minded allies but emphasizes the need for America to act unilaterally at times to help consolidate democracy. Clinton, by contrast, argues that there is a broader opportunity "to reinvent the institutions of collective security." The United Nations in particular has lost much of its earlier debility as a result of the end of the cold war and should be relied upon more extensively not only for peacekeeping but also for deterrent purposes.

There are, of course, limitations to neo-Wilsonianism of either variety. As a broad goal, the consolidation and extension of democracy is worthy and unobjectionable, but simply to state this as a "vision" for the world leaves at least two important questions unanswered. First, it does not explain how the United States is to manage its concrete political relationships with other stable, industrialized democracies, given recent changes in the distribution of power around the world. And second, it doesn't explain clearly when to be a neo-Wilsonian and when to be a realist, since even the most die-hard Wilsonian would have to admit that a good deal of the world will not easily make a transition to democracy.

If dealing with democratic allies is a particular pitfall for realists, dealing with non- or would-be democratic

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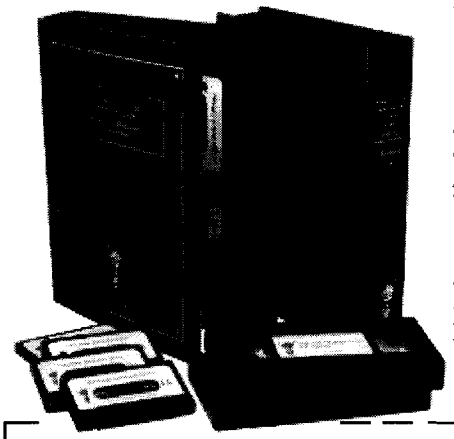

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countries is a trap for neo-Wilsonians. It is fine to say that the consolidation or extension of the democratic "zone of peace" ought to be an objective of U.S. policy, but this begs the question of when and where to promote democracy, and at what cost. Haiti is a case in point. In order to force the military government to restore the elected president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, to power, the Bush administration has imposed harsh sanctions that have produced great misery for the population of this poor country. Although Aristide's democratic legitimacy is not in question, his commitment to liberal democracy is, given his strongly Marxist background. His restoration to power will most likely mark not the beginning of a new era, as the elections of Walesa and Havel did in Poland and Czechoslovakia, but rather the beginning of a new period of political chaos.

The truth is that not all countries are equally capable of sustaining stable democracy; nor are all countries of equal importance to the United States. The democratic revolutions in southern Europe, Latin America, Asia, and the Communist bloc have demonstrated that democracy has far greater appeal and resilience than anyone imagined a generation ago. But this does not mean that most of the remaining non-democratic world is on the verge of a democratic transition. Indeed, the current "third wave" of democratizations, as Samuel Huntington has noted, has probably exhausted itself and may well retreat in the next few years. There are a variety of cultural and social barriers to democracy, among them fundamentalist Islam. The most reliable overall indicator of successful democratization is a country's level of socioeconomic development. This explains why Hungary, Poland, and Czechoslovakia have had an easier transition to democracy than Romania or Albania, and why the prospects for Chile and Argentina look much better than Peru's. By this standard, Haiti, with its largely illiterate, desperately impoverished population, would seem to be a poor candidate for stable democracy, whereas Thailand, with its booming economy and growing population of educated, middle-class professionals, would seem poised for a more or less permanent change in its political system.

Neo-Wilsonians, then, need to develop a "realistic" and tough-minded strategy for encouraging democracy around the world. This means choosing one's targets with care, since there are very sharp limits to American resources and patience, and tolerating certain forms of authoritarian government as a transitional strategy, since some of the most successful recent democratizations have occurred in countries that combined free markets with closed politics. Countries like Mexico and Malaysia will require special attention as their political systems adjust to rapid economic growth. Just as one does not want to "impose" democracy on a country not ripe for it, neither does one want to preserve an anachronistic status quo in rapidly changing countries simply in the name of "stability."

The only document that seriously tried to formulate a national strategy steering a sensible course between the realist and idealist camps was the Pentagon's "Defense Policy Guidance," or DPG. Unfortunately, the DPG has acquired a false reputation as the most "hyper" of all realist positions. Patrick Tyler, the military correspondent for *The New York Times*, broke a story on March 8 that the Defense Department was drafting a policy paper that sought to "ensure that no rival superpower is allowed to emerge in Western Europe, Asia, or the territory of the former Soviet Union." The draft DPG, as quoted by the *Times*, asserted that "the U.S. must show the leadership necessary to establish and protect a new order that holds the promise of convincing potential competitors that they need not aspire to a greater role or pursue a more aggressive posture to protect their legitimate interests." Tyler suggested that the Bush administration was now looking to quash potential threats from democratic allies so as to preserve its status as the globe's sole superpower. According to Tyler, the "benevolent domination by one power" articulated "the clearest rejection to date of collective internationalism, the strategy that emerged from World War II when the five victorious powers sought to form a United Nations that could mediate disputes and police outbreaks of violence."

The *Times* story provoked outrage at home and questions from American allies, a remarkable impact for a working-level draft unedited either by Defense Secretary Richard Cheney or the document's formal author, Undersecretary for Policy Paul Wolfowitz. The initial version was furiously reworked, and in a subsequent story Tyler announced that in the revised version the Pentagon had dropped its goal of blocking the emergence of new superpowers. In fact, neither the original interpretation of the document nor news of its retraction was correct.

Judging from what has been made public, the original draft never asserted that the United States would "block" the emergence of its allies as global powers. It did suggest that by maintaining traditional cold war alliances into the post-cold war era, and by maintaining forward-deployed forces in Europe and Asia, the United States could reassure its friends so that they wouldn't feel compelled to rearm in a major way. The two countries most at issue are Germany and Japan. Both have accepted restrictions on their military capabilities and ultimately their sovereignty as a result of their ties to the United States: neither country has deployed troops abroad, exported weapons, or acquired nuclear arms, and Japan has accepted sharp limits on its conventional forces. The perpetuation of a situation wherein Europe's and Asia's dominant economic powers continue to accept limits on their military capabilities in the absence of a unifying Soviet threat would defy all realist predictions about state behavior. This could occur only if one assumed that the community of values shared within a democratic "zone of peace" overrode the realist drive for "power maximization." Thus the authors of the DPG, far from being "hyper-realists," accepted the neo-Wilsonian premise that democracy changes the fundamental character of

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international relations, while sensibly recognizing that much of the non-democratic world would continue to operate according to realist premises.

The alternatives to the American-led world envisioned by the DPG all involve radical changes in the current structure of global security and, consequently, substantial risks. While the world has become de facto multipolar in economic and political terms, a return to military multipolarity is far from attractive. Democrats, beginning with Clinton, have to recognize that if the United States cuts its defense budget substantially below the 25 percent reduction envisioned by the Cheney Pentagon over the next five years, it will be forced to withdraw from many of its forward deployments in Europe and the Far East, which would in turn stimulate real pressures for regional rearmament. A purely European defense organization will have to rely heavily on German power, and the prospect of foreign deployment of German troops will inevitably create crippling tensions in Europe itself. French and British fears of a German power play in Croatia are precisely what prevented the European Community from taking strong action early on in the Balkan crisis, and does not create a promising precedent for a future European security organization.

What is true for Europe applies in spades to Asia. It is safe to say that there is not a single nation in the Far East that looks forward to Japanese remilitarization and an end to the subordinate Japanese role within the U.S.-Japan security relationship. The furious Asian reaction to Japan's recent passage of the peacekeeping bill is just a foretaste of what would happen should the current "un-realist" U.S.-Japanese relationship erode. The revised version of the DPG restates the poorly articulated premise of the original draft succinctly: "It is not in our interest or those of the other democracies to return to earlier periods in which multiple military powers balanced one against another in what passed for security structures, while regional, or even global peace hung in the balance."

There is, of course, a third alternative to uni- and multipolarity: an increasing role for the United Nations in guaranteeing international security. The original Tyler article suggested that the DPG was making a radical break with a postwar American tradition that placed emphasis on U.N. collective security, and that the Pentagon would have rejected collective action through the U.N. during the Gulf war. This is a strange interpretation of history: the U.N. served merely as window-dressing for U.S. unilateralism during the Gulf crisis and would have been impotent were it not for U.S. leadership. As the DPG itself recognized, collective action through the U.N. is not an alternative but a *complement* to American leadership. It is foolish to think, however, that action through the U.N. can substitute for American leadership when even bodies of like-minded states such as NATO and the E.C. have had trouble making tough decisions.

To say that the U.N. was window-dressing does not imply that it was unimportant. Were it not for the existence of a broad U.N. coalition, the Bush administration would never have gotten Congress to agree to war powers; nor would the United States have had as many allies in its fight with Iraq. The U.N. will never provide leadership in times of international crisis, as its current paralysis over Bosnia indicates. But it is perfectly serviceable as an instrument of American unilateralism and indeed may be the primary mechanism through which that unilateralism will be exercised in the future, paradoxical as that might sound.

The agonizingly ineffective intervention of the international community in Bosnia is an example of an alternative use for the U.N. in the post-cold war order: as a mechanism for *avoiding* unilateral intervention. In the Yugoslav civil war, idealistic and realistic considerations have clashed head on. On humanitarian grounds, it is hard not to want to aid the Bosnians, but any hard-headed weighing of the rather minimal U.S. interests in the region against the prospect of getting caught in a costly, Lebanon-style civil conflict would dictate prudence. The U.N. provides a means for other nations more directly affected by the conflict to contribute some modicum of relief while taking pressure off the United States to play a central role. This is perhaps why those with isolationist instincts such as Ross Perot were fond of referring international problems to the U.N. Using the U.N. to evade rather than fulfill international responsibilities is not a terribly edifying spectacle. But the future promises many new instances of painful ethnic conflicts whose ramifications will be regionally limited, and where the United States cannot afford to intervene on its own.

Although the DPG established a good framework for a post-cold war strategy, there are three crucial details not yet filled in. Even if Japan and Germany avoid major rearmament, there is a real question as to how long they will continue to acquiesce in subordinating their policies to Washington. The Gulf war left deep scars in both countries—especially in Japan—where many felt their economic contribution entitled them to genuine consultation. Continuation of these alliances will require big changes in the way Washington has long done business with its friends, changes that few Americans will readily accept. A second issue concerns the degree to which the United States will be willing to depart from market principles in promoting its international economic position. The final issue concerns whether and how far we want to extend our NATO commitments eastward. The DPG suggests we will have an interest in preventing Russia from re-emerging as the hegemonic Eurasian power, but will Americans support their sons and daughters dying to defend freedom in Kiev, Vilnius, or even Warsaw? Will the Europeans? These questions will remain moot, of course, until we have a clearer sense of who is threatening whom, and which post-Communist states will be able to make the transition to stable democracy. But they will constitute the policy agenda for the next administration, of whatever party. •

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BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Hasidim and Hokum

The rumor was true. Prerelease gossip muttered that Sidney Lumet's new film **A Stranger Among Us** (Buena Vista) was a retread of Peter Weir's *Witness* (1985); and so it is. A tough urban detective, trying to solve a murder, has to settle into a strict religious community, and sexual attraction develops between the detective and one of that community. There are a few changes of detail in Lumet's film. Instead of a male detective, a female, Melanie Griffith. Instead of the Amish community in Pennsylvania, the Hasidic community in Brooklyn. The attraction is between Griffith and the head rabbi's son and heir apparent, who is to Jewish learning, we're told, what Mozart was to music.

To still any qualms in the Orthodox, let's reveal at once that the young Talmudist never succumbs to Griffith's curvy come-on, even though he twice puts himself—unbelievably—in vulnerable situations. But those moments are only the most blatant among the contrivances in Robert J. Avrech's screenplay, a piece of carpentry that stumbles from the workbench with all the lathemarks and bent nails visible.

The best quality in the picture is one that has been vivid in many Lumet films—his feeling for New York, its multifariousness, its ugliness, its weirdly persistent beauty. (Possibly it was the chance to work in New York that attracted Lumet to this project.) He has even dealt once before with Jews in Brooklyn: *Bye Bye Braverman* (1968). Here with Andrzej Bartkowiak, the Polish-born cinematographer with whom he has often worked, he fixes the look of the Hasidic community, the diamond-market street (47th) in Manhattan, the feel of Hasidic homes. Lumet and Bartkowiak suffuse those places with a slight overdose of golden glow, and there isn't one glimpse of a black face in the Brooklyn streets, no trace of the conflicts that have erupted there, but these flaws are part of the realistically detailed yet unrealistic tale that the picture tells.

Once there was an Italian starlet, well-known for a while, whose own voice was never once used in any of her films. She was attractive physically, but not vocally. Another woman, with an appealing voice, dubbed all the starlet's roles. If only they did this with Melanie Griffith. She has sexual presence, even a jot of acting ability. But that voice! It's like scraping tin with a file. Eric Thal, the Talmudic prodigy, is pallid in more than one way. And poor Lee Richardson, the good actor who plays the *rebbe* of the community, had to let himself be smothered with wig and beard and side-curls every day through the making of this film for a part that, as actors say, he could have phoned in.

Once more the film form proves the speciousness of an overrated play. Craig Lucas's **Prelude to a Kiss** (20th Century Fox), on stage, seemed to me a comedy-romance right out of the 1940s *Ladies Home Journal*, updated in sexual views and freighted with an ill-fitting Serious Theme. (This compulsion to load seriousness onto fluff obsesses several of our contemporary play-confectioners.) *Prelude* was nonetheless hailed for, among other alleged assets, its profound symbolism. On screen, in Lucas's own adaptation, it fractures into gloss and glop. The "closeness" of the film medium exposes the trickery.

After a whirlwind yet laid-back romance, Alec Baldwin and Meg Ryan get married. At the wedding party, Sydney Walker, an old man who is a complete stranger, kisses the bride on the mouth. Lightning flashes, the skies darken, and souls are exchanged—hers is in the old man's body and vice versa. Baldwin eventually discovers that his wife is trapped inside the old man, so to speak, and kisses him on the mouth to reassure her. In time, souls are re-exchanged, with more lightning and cloud.

This whole rigmarole has been taken by some as an allegory of the desperations of mortality, or of the fight against AIDS, or anything else that seemed allegorizable. (The old man—or, rather, his body—is dying of cirrhosis and cancer.) For myself, I felt only that Lucas had begun with the idea of a young man kissing an old man tenderly on the mouth and had worked backward from that to make it possible. Doing so, however, he failed to explain why his superhip young people never comment either on the heavenly display or the fact that they are caught in a supernatural entanglement. Lucas has them both behave as

FILMS WORTH SEEING

The Best Intentions. *Ingmar Bergman's screenplay about the courtship and early married years of his parents. The texture of a Strindbergian novel, exquisitely directed by Bille August. (Reviewed 8/10/92)* **Howards End.** *E. M. Forster is pretty well adapted and splendidly acted, chiefly by Vanessa Redgrave, Emma Thompson, and Anthony Hopkins. James Ivory's best directing. (3/23/92)* **A League of Their Own.** *Based on fact—a female professional baseball league during World War II—it gets some laughs and tears out of a journeyman script. Tom Hanks is a manager, Geena Davis his star player. (8/3/92)* **Monster in a Box.** *A talk (essentially) by Spalding Gray—witty, articulate, shrewd—about his adventures while writing a novel. The manuscript is the monster that he carried about with him in a box. (7/6/92)* **—SK**

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if this were one of the common problems of young marrieds today.

The best news is that Alec Baldwin, previously limp, is here lively and sharp. Meg Ryan has a puckish comic sense, as she showed in *When Harry Met Sally . . .*, and she skitters along charmingly again. Sydney Walker, once a familiar figure on the New York stage where he was dull, hasn't changed.

The best performance in **Death Becomes Her** (Universal) is by Sydney Pollack in a brief scene. This is a drastic thing to say about a picture that stars Meryl Streep—and (though this is less shocking) Goldie Hawn and Bruce Willis. Pollack, much better known as a director, occasionally acts in films: he was Dustin Hoffman's agent in *Tootsie*, which he directed.

In this farce-fantasy written by Martin Donovan and David Koepp, Streep and Hawn drink a potion that gives them eternal life and youth. After a fall down a flight of stairs that would have killed anyone else five times over, Streep is taken to a hospital and is examined by a doctor—Pollack (who directed her in *Out of Africa*). She not only has a severely fractured neck, she has no life signs whatsoever, yet she sits there blithely chatting with him. Pollack's reactions to all this are—almost—worth the price of admission.

Two other mild pleasantnesses. Hawn does her best work since *Private Benjamin*, including a sequence in which she weighs about 300 pounds and gorges on ice cream. And Willis is passable as Streep's wimpy husband. The director, Robert Zemeckis, surely helped him, but Willis is apparently better in off-center roles like this and the one in *In Country* than as a hero of derring-do that turns out to be derring-don't.

As for Streep, she does what she is asked to do, which mostly consists of subjecting herself to a lot of special effects. At one point her head is twisted around so that she faces backward as she walks. But the role is popcorn. She plays an actress-singer, and at the start she does a number in a Broadway musical—quite well. People in the screen audience walk out because they think she's old and dreadful: I couldn't agree. The rest is just a series of gags. She isn't really asked to act, just to do revue-sketch setups and payoffs.

Streep has evidently opted for a straight film career. (She used to vary films with theater work.) In such a life, living from screenplay to screenplay, dreck must occur: e.g., *Still of the Night*, *She-Devil*, and this. Probably the best we can hope for her, in Movieland, is an even break. Maybe half the films she does will be worthy of her talent. •

The strange fate of Walter Scott.

Falling Out of the Canon

By Irving Howe

In 1825 William Hazlitt observed that "Sir Walter Scott is undoubtedly the most popular writer of the age"—to which he shrewdly added, he "is 'lord of the ascendent' for the time being." That "for the time being" would stretch out for perhaps a century, during which Scott not only remained the great favorite of the reading public but also exerted a major influence on writers in Europe and America. But then—it's hard to give an exact date—something remarkable happened. Scott lost his grip on the imagination of the public, and, except in schools where *Ivanhoe* was still wearily assigned, he came to be treated as a worthy historical relic. The writer whom the brilliant Hazlitt had admired and whom, more than a century later, the Marxist critic Georg Lukacs treated with notable respect just dropped out of the canon. Dropped out so quickly that one must wonder: What can have happened to account for such a drastic change in literary taste?

This change can hardly have been a consequence of sharp revisions in critical judgment, since many of the faults that now seem glaring in Scott's fiction were already noticed by his contemporaries. That his prose is stuffed with elegant filler; that his plots have a way of dwindling into shapeless anecdote; that his "high" characters speak in exalted fustian rather than any language known to man or woman; that he is better at sketching the postures of bodies than at penetrating souls (even with regard to the much-praised Jeanie Deans, the plucky maiden of *The Heart of Midlothian*); that his minor characters often don't know, as minor characters should, when to make their exit: such criticisms are quite as old as the admiration that generations of hearty Englishmen have given him.

To go back to his contemporaries is to experience bewilderment. Goethe thought his "scenes and situations . . . the summit of art." Heine found his "partiality for the past . . . wholesome for literature." But Stendhal saw in Scott only "historical merit," the kind "which will grow old the soonest," and declared his "mannered approximations" to be "distasteful." Rounding the French dismissal, Balzac has a character in *Lost Illusions* say that "there is no passion in Walter Scott; either he himself is without it, or it is forbidden by the hypocritical laws of his country." Yet neither praise nor attack made much difference to Scott's nineteenth-century reputation. He seemed invulnerable.

Scott wrote neither a pure nor a pungent English. He nattered on insufferably. His mind was decently pedestrian, without much moral energy. ("The spiritual sleep of that man," said George Eliot, "was awful.") But Scott did have one considerable advantage as a writer: he was in possession of, or possessed by, an urgent subject, one that spurred him to nostalgia and contradiction in large and numerous fictions.

Hazlitt called Scott "a prophesier of the past," and by this striking phrase I take him to mean, among other things, that Scott was so deeply immersed in his native culture through stories, legends, ballads, and memories that one could readily imagine him living, say, in 1745 and accurately forecasting Scotland's future. Scott had a real claim to a historical imagination, a sense of how history carves out its paths regardless of individual desire. He was a witness to the slow death of the hopes for an independent Scottish nationality, and this forms a major theme in his novels. He conveyed, in the words of David Daiches,

> a tragic sense of the inevitability of a drab but necessary progress, a sense of the impotence of the traditional kind of heroism, a passionately regretful awareness of the fact that the Good Old Cause was lost forever and the glory of Scotland must give way to her interest.

Except for Daiches's opening phrase—"a tragic sense"—this is keen. I would say that in his writings Scott rarely achieves the severity of perception, the single-minded concentration on a line of fatality, that we call tragic. The Scott character who approaches genuine pathos is Rob Roy in the novel of that name, a stubborn semi-outlaw living by

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the collapsed tradition of his clan in opposition to English rule; but even this, while perhaps grand, is not tragic. For if Scott is old Tory at heart, his mind settles quite comfortably into new Whig. He is shrewdly aware that the power of the state in London is a reality it would be foolish to deny, and often this results in a recognition that the old Scots order of heroic deeds and sublime vistas is done for.

It may be objected that such a view of Scott's theme is too distant for a full imaginative engagement, but I would reply that this is precisely the trouble with Scott himself: he doesn't fully engage with his theme. For all the flashy battles and the verbal bravado of his costume dramas, Scott is extremely cautious in dealing with "the Good Old Cause" as it proceeds through several historical variants. His nostalgia can seem a literary convenience, handy for pageant romances and adding "color" to his brushings in the Flemish mode. But finally he is too much the canny rationalist and too relaxed in mind—Walter Bagehot said he had "the enjoying temper"—to yield himself with tragic force to a fading past. For that, you have to be blessedly crazy, just a little, like William Faulkner. Scott was sane.

What I am saying may hold a little more for a later novel like *Redgauntlet* (1824) than for Scott's earlier novels in the Waverly series. *Redgauntlet* evokes "the Good Old Cause" in its phase of decline, a recall of sentimentality. In an imaginary episode departing from Scott's usual rough adherence to historical actuality, there is a brief appearance by the Pretender, now middle-aged and stiff in the joints, and a strong appearance by the Jacobite fanatic Redgauntlet, for whom a defiance of history has become his life's credo. But about two-thirds of the way (the point at which a number of Scott's novels collapse), the Jacobite plot suffers a rapid disintegration, almost falling into farce. Scott has known all along that the Stuart cause is hopeless, so that little of *Redgauntlet*, though it is one of his better novels, can really be called tragic. The narrative dissipation is finally a reflection of the writer's discomfort with his theme.

By now, also, the historical circumstances on which Scott's novels depend have slipped out of common knowledge: what might have seemed alive in the nineteenth century hardly seems so today. Who is likely to be clear in mind about the Covenanters and the Cameronians, the Erastians and other sects? A reprint of *Rob Roy* (1817) or *Old Mortality* (1816) would now require copious annotation, both about the religious tendencies and political groupings of Scotland in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and the sequences of uprisings that Scott depicts. Perhaps that is the fate of all historical fiction. A few years from now *Darkness at Noon*, which evoked furious debate on its appearance in 1940, may need descriptive footnotes: What were the Moscow trials? Who was Bukharin? And Stalin—exactly when did that king reign?

There have been several recent efforts to revive Scott's reputation. One of these follows the lead of Lukacs, who, in *The Historical Novel*, keeps praising Scott as a "great writer," not because he seems especially delighted with any of his novels but because he finds in Scott a schema of historical transformation from the "feudal" clans of traditional Scottish society to the commercial order dominant in Sir Walter's day. Lukacs's historical schema is ready-made, and he fits it to the novels with a few tokens of gratification. For readers not well acquainted with Scott's works, Lukacs's laying-out of their progression can have a certain persuasiveness, but when he writes that Scott's "greatness lies in his capacity to give living human embodiment to historical-social types," one hastens to dissent. Scott's characters and scenes are mostly of the picturesque variety: long before Hollywood, Scott was using technicolor. And not only is he a careless writer in English (his Scots dialogue is often sharply piquant), but his large-scale confrontations and dramas are often slipshod, the "mannered approximations" of which Stendhal spoke.

A more sophisticated defense of Scott comes from critics who say that his books should not be judged by the standards of the novel, for they are really romances. Insofar as the term "romance" sanctions departures from verisimilitude, it may indeed be applied to Scott's fictions; but call them what you wish, the lassitude of language and tedium of depiction remain. And a still more modest defense is that there are "good things" in Scott. Of course there are: he can do a florid, stagy set piece. He has a few figures, like Rob Roy, memorable in their decline. He puts together strong mob scenes. He can elicit a throb from Jeanie Deans's long tramp to London in *The Heart of Midlothian* (1818). And in *Old Mortality* (1816) he contributes a very funny chapter depicting a clutter of demented fanatics exhorting a rebel gathering of Scottish Presbyterians in an exercise of "participatory democracy" unnervingly similar to some I witnessed in the 1960s.

Yet all these defenses evade the critical question: What do you make of the novels (or the romances, if you prefer) in their own right? My own reading suggests that it is *Old Mortality* that holds up best, perhaps because it is the one novel in which Scott's distaste for fanaticism, both of the Royalist and Covenanting varieties, is allowed full imaginative play.

Why then was Scott so beloved, not only among the mass of readers but also by some of the eminent literary people of the nineteenth century? I must confess to lacking a fully satisfactory answer: there is a critical gulf here that seems impassable. What is clear, however, is that nineteenth-century readers could yield themselves more readily than we do to the rouge of spectacle. There was still much wonderment about exotic places, sustaining a taste for the picturesque. And evidently readers a century ago were more tolerant of Scott's garrulousness than we are likely to be. They didn't feel our need for novels to *move*.

The whole idea of what a novel should be was changing radically even in the years of Scott's early popularity. A generous man, he praised Jane Austen's art without apparently realizing that it had dealt a severe blow to the kind of fiction that he was writing. At first, the culture of romanticism welcomed his gift for the picturesque, which necessarily entailed a rough typicality in the sketching of character; but then that culture came to favor a complex psychology of character that was quite beyond Scott's reach. Dickens and George Eliot borrowed here and there from Scott, but they also left him far behind.

Still, if sensitive and intelligent nineteenth-century readers didn't mind Scott's long-windedness, and could follow his tangled plots, and took pleasure in his comic interludes, why should we now find Scott so tiresome? (I assume that most of us do, though a few hardy souls will be outraged by my every word.) Perhaps because Scotland has dropped out of historical consciousness. Perhaps because the idea of nationalism no longer evokes the innocently heroic sentiments that it did in the time of Garibaldi. Perhaps because we have come to regard the novel less as an entertainment and more as a vehicle for the testing of values. Not many of Scott's contemporaries would have grasped what D.H. Lawrence meant when he called the novel "the bright book of life."

There is still another reason, and I think a fundamental one, for Scott's decline in literary standing. It may at first seem a narrowly literary reason, but it is actually rooted in the depths of history. Scott wrote as if not only he, but all his readers, enjoyed world enough and time. That narratives might be foreshort-

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ened, conversations clipped, and tempos hastened seems never to have occurred to him—except in the last fifty or so pages of his books, when he seems eager simply to get it all done with. The clock does not check Scott's imagination. Must every scene be painted to the last tint? Every byplay of minor figures rendered to the last turn of dialect? Every hero orate in swollen prose? One fancies the thought of Scott edited by Beckett.

I exaggerate, but only a little. There are variations of tempo in Scott, and he can work up a climax of suspense (though it seems always to droop into detumescence). But given the sense of time that he inherited from his culture, he had little need to clip, skip, focus. Pageants are not to be rushed.

Nor is this a matter of length. One's feeling that his novels drag has more to do with pacing than length. Some of Dickens's novels are longer than those of Scott, but there is a nervous tension in Dickens that signals a kinship with our age. Scott did not know the tempo of the city. Pacing is a crucial element in the novel, often a tacit reflection of a writer's worldview. Between readers who a century ago adored Scott and those brought up on Borges and Beckett there are differences of assumption so profound as to resist definition, differences that reveal themselves in the varying speeds with which the eye follows a line of type and the mind takes in its matter. •

Lust and Logic

BY MICHAEL LEVENSON

The Selected Letters of Bertrand Russell: Volume One The Private Years (1884-1914) edited by Nicholas Griffin

(Houghton Mifflin, 553 pp., $35)

Imagine what the life of this twentieth century would have had to be for Bertrand Russell to stand not just as a figure of brilliance deservedly remembered, but as an epitome of the age, as a quintessence of modernity. Ours must have been a century that followed the beam of Enlightenment and lived under the banner of free thought, an epoch of liberating skepticism inexorably softening the grip of dogma and strengthening tolerance. It would have been another Age of Reason. It has not been that.

"The force that in the long run makes for peace and all other good things is Reason, the power of thinking against instinct"—this is Russell to Ottoline Morrell on the eve of the First World War, asserting his credo in the face of catastrophe. No figure of the last hundred years more fully lived the mind's life, or more dramatically staged the mind's heroics and its terrible failures. Alfred North Whitehead, his collaborator on *Principia Mathematica*, called Russell the greatest analytic thinker in the history of philosophy, and such praise has confirmed the legend of a cold and brittle intellect, as bitingly sharp as the angles of the aging face: a logical prodigy with a satyr's sexual itch.

He was so much more than that. You need not admire Russell all the way down in order to feel that his glaring excesses cast light on the usual routines. He was *more* in so many ways: more gifted, blue-blooded, energetic, sexually obsessed, politically aroused. In a generous appraisal of Beatrice and Sidney Webb, he wrote that "one should not demand of anybody all the things that add value to a human being. To have some of them is as much as should be demanded." So it was with Russell: he had some of them, more than his share, and even his defects, spectacularly on show, are more illuminating than the virtues of most of us.

No one should expect the life of Bertrand Russell to come steadily into focus. It was not that kind of life. We have his *Autobiography*, the first volumes of his *Collected Papers*, a rich quarry of memoirs by others, a big biography from Ronald Clark and another on the way from Ray Monk. And now we have this first volume of *Selected Letters*, which adds only modest information but gives lush new density to the texture of personality. As the materials gather, Russell becomes no more coherent, but—one would not have thought it either possible or bearable—more vivid.

His ninety-seven years began in 1872, when he was born as the third child out of the aristocratic union of Amberley Russell and Kate Stanley. Both parents were emancipated Victorian liberals, who chose the great liberal patron saint John Stuart Mill as Bertrand's godfather, and were, in their son's words, "ardent theorists of reform and prepared to put into practice whatever theory they believed in." Kate was a committed feminist; Amberley was briefly a member of Parliament, but having made a speech in favor of birth control, his political career collapsed. No one can say how their radicalism would have engaged the circuits encoded in their son's electric brain, but it is evident that their untimely deaths, before Bertrand was 4, removed any chance that his upbringing would be serene.

His father's father was Lord John Russell, illustrious Whig politician of the mid-nineteenth century, who had introduced the great Reform Act of 1832 and then twice served as prime minister. It was Lord John's second wife, Frances, twenty-three years younger than he, who took responsibility for raising the orphaned Bertie. Politically and religiously liberal in the most impeccable family tradition, she was nevertheless her queen's contemporary in everyday moral views: "[My grandmother's] morality was that of a Victorian Puritan, and nothing would have persuaded her that a man who swore on occasion might nevertheless have some good qualities." The result was that young Bertrand grew up without the likely softening influence of his parents' program of tolerance. During a period of epochal change, a transitional generation was missing in his life, which meant that the conflict between Russell and his grandmother, between modern emancipation and Victorian propriety, showed itself, when it came, in its most unmitigated, even brutal, aspect.

Educated by private tutors, largely cut off from companionship with other children, Russell lived through the anxieties of his era, hiding his doubts inside the pages of a Greek copy book. Alone he lost faith, first in immortality, then in God. In their place he found sex and mathematics. A small, shy boy raised in a large decaying house by an aging Puritan, he had few standards by which to measure the quivers of his mind and body. This stunted early life meant that when he finally joined the public world, he entered its arenas with a tremendous whoosh of discovery. So this is Cambridge; so this is lust. Well into early middle age, he gave the sense of just beginning mature life, just descending into the room where the adults were conducting their grown-up mysteries.

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Two encounters of late adolescence brought the blinking Russell out into bright air. First, upon arriving at Cambridge in 1890, he was quickly identified as a person of gifts and invited to join the Apostles, that well-known secret society that put a fence around his fragility and fertilized his talents. Family precedent had pointed Russell toward the political career that he always assumed would be his. But as it did for so many other awkwardly brilliant young men of the period, the Apostles justified unworldliness, and though Russell saw the absurdities of "academical hair-splitting," he well understood the consolations of such a refuge:

> In the evening I have been discussing various irrelevant subjects such as whether the universe (=God) can be conceived as a person, whether direction or the straight line ought to be considered fundamental in Geometry, how many fallacies there are in Herbert Spencer's proof that life-sustaining and life-producing actions are those and those alone which give pleasure, etc. etc. It is almost impossible not to feel perfectly calm in a place where people seriously think such subjects worth discussing for they are *so* irrelevant.

The other encounter was with Alys Pearsall Smith, youngest daughter in a family of Philadelphia Quakers living in Britain and earnestly committed to a set of progressive causes: feminism, free love, temperance. Was it the emotional void in Bertie that produced the quick romantic surge toward Alys? Impossible to know. Although he claimed it had been love at first sight, Russell had known her for several years before the spring of 1893, when he turned 21, and his infatuation became desperate.

The first long phase of this volume of letters records the history of that desperation. Week by week, often day by day, Russell pleaded and promised and cajoled and retracted. They fretted over their discrepancy in age (Alys was five years older), their differences in sociability (he for privacy, she for other people), and, most explosively, their religious views. Alys was a believer, while Bertie was an uncompromising anti-Christian who pulled philosophical rank by insisting that "no reader of metaphysics" could believe in a personal God. In the long, exhausting record of the eighteen months before marriage, the major note is of him chasing, her receding; he brashly scorning difficulties, she warily doubting his confidence.

And then, when the two had toiled into mutual understanding, Russell's family intervened in a concerted attempt to prevent the marriage. Class difference, national difference, difference in age: these considerations were tried, and when they failed to sway, medical science was recruited. Doctors came forward to warn that heredity was against the match, that mental illness on both sides made it unsafe for the couple to have children. Well then, announced Russell, they would be childless; and with this the old specter of birth control returned, leading to new domestic hysteria and new medical forebodings.

Told through these daily letters, the high melodrama of the engagement shows itself as far darker than the *Autobiography* had allowed; and the resolve to marry appears as both stronger and more fateful. Here they are, two enlightened young people of a century ago, talking themselves into a close romantic understanding while the weight of the past lowers itself remorselessly. The aristocratic consciousness of the Russells was unable to stop the marriage, but it badly disrupted the smooth course of love.

Early married life is a nuisance to the biographer. Letters dry up; diaries are faithlessly neglected. How dare they! The most shadowy period of Russell's adult life is the first seven years of marriage, when the financially secure couple set out to build productive lives, in their own ways, Alys often traveling to lecture on temperance, Bertrand at home reading and writing philosophy. With so little evidence, and so much of it already distorted by later resentments, it is impossible to read through the intermittent letters to the truth of their relation.

And was there such a truth? Between 1894 when they won the victory of marriage and 1901 when marriage failed, the sketchy record suggests that their life was placid and happy—as Russell sometimes said it was—but also placid and confining, as he also said. He offered various explanations for the death of his love, but in an early draft of the *Autobiography*, he put the issue most simply: "I now believe that it is not in my nature to remain physically fond of any woman for more than seven or eight years. As I view it now, this was the basis of the matter, and the rest was humbug." The clutch of memoirs suggests that his Alys could be as provoking as her Bertrand, but it must count for something that at the end of the day she was the one who still loved.

In this episode as throughout, the editor of the selection, Nicholas Griffin, has shown tact, sensitivity, and good taste. With an estimated 40,000 to 50,000 letters in the Russell archive, no commercially viable collection can even approach the fantasy of a fully documented life. Griffin disarmingly admits that he might have redone the volume several times over, each time with a completely different selection of letters. His solution has been to fill the inevitable gaps with sometimes elaborate commentary, constructing a continuous narrative to surround an evening's epiphany. As judiciously as this has been done, it cannot relieve the worry, acutely felt in a case such as Russell's, that even the rich personal testimony of a letter gives its own serious distortions.

For one thing, the silence of Alys is deafening—much as it is in the cool chapter called "Engagement" in Russell's *Autobiography*, where he appends more than a dozen long letters of his own but not one from her. For another thing, these letters, as wrenching as they can be, trace only one line in the polygon of Russell's life. How good is their evidence? Now that various diaries have been published in the *Collected Papers*, we can see what a complex waltz was danced between the private journals, the letters, and the published writings. As the marriage failed in the early years of this century, Russell began to keep a new journal, where he acknowledged that he had been "writing cold letters to Alys, in the deliberate hope of destroying her affection." This cynical moment is a good reminder that even personal correspondence has already taken one long step in the direction of publicity.

In the case of Russell, private letters must be seen as only one dramatic mask worn by a complexly performing self. As irresistibly interesting as they are, they no more make the royal road to some secret core of being than all the many documents with which they compete. In a gloomy moment, Russell wrote to Alys that "at bottom I am a weak vacillating wretch and have always derived what strength I had from others." Take away the harsh pejoratives and the remark offers a fair reading of his volatile character, which could correct its opinions several times a day, and recant a philosophic position with the same breathtaking conclusiveness with which it recanted wives.

What gives dark irony to all this is that Russell had so brightly hoped to make a life of noble unity and self-consistency. He had often thought of his coming marriage as a chance to build new wholes, and so, for instance, had encouraged Alys to read history as a time-saving complement to his philosophy. ("Thee has quite enough brains to be a good collector of historical material.") Similarly, in a moment of early irrepressible ambition, he imagined writing two series of books—one leading from mathematics to physiology and one on social and political questions—that would "ultimately meet in a synthesis at once scientific and practical."

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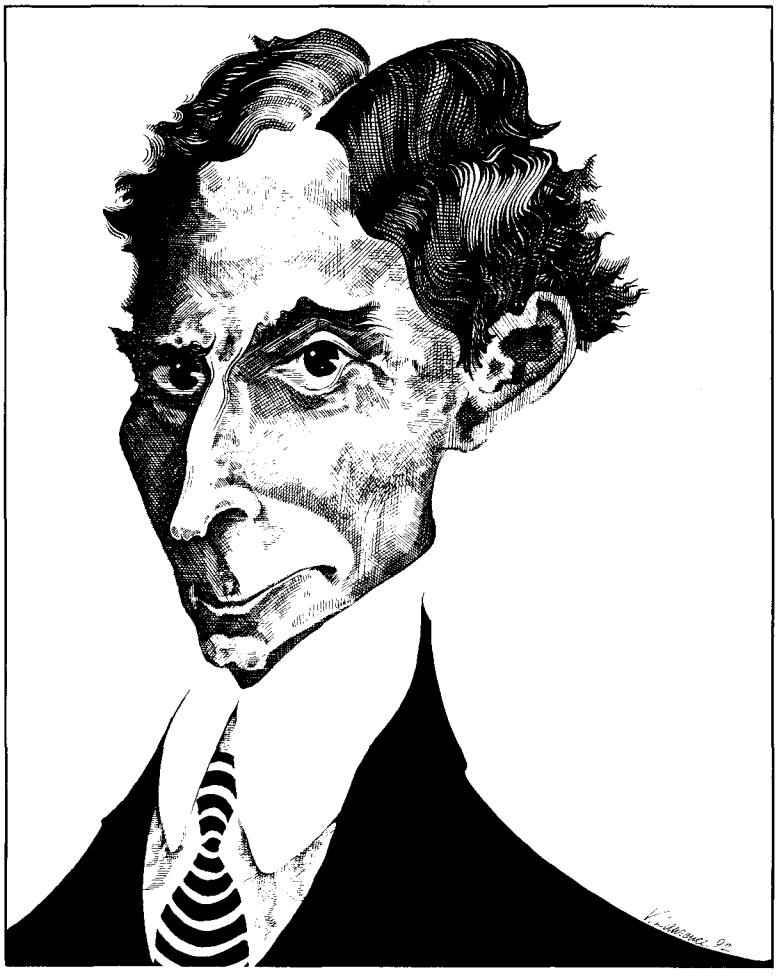
This dream (for a life and a life's work) comes in part from temperament, and in part from metaphysics. Russell at Cambridge came under the influence of F. H. Bradley and J. E. McTaggart, the British Hegelians, who saw the Whole, the Unified, the Absolute as alone fully real, alone truly meaningful. Their universe, as Russell put it later, "was like a jelly in the fact that, if you touched any one part of it, the whole quivered; but it was unlike a jelly in the fact that it could not really be cut up into parts." The parts were a delusion; time and space, mere appearance; common sense, a treacherous deceiver.

In 1798 Wordsworth and Coleridge, in an unsurpassed act of poetic will, disclaimed the fancifications of literary speech and taught themselves to speak of plainer things in plainer words. Exactly 100 years later, in another great collaboration, Russell and G. E. Moore repeated an analogous version of this work that will always have to be done again. Together at Cambridge they fought themselves free of the Hegelian orthodoxy and made what can fairly be called a philosophic revolution:

> With a sense of escaping from prison, we allowed ourselves to think that grass is green, that the sun and stars would exist if no one was aware of them, and also that there is a pluralistic timeless world of Platonic ideas. The world, which had been thin and logical, suddenly became rich and varied and solid.

"Escape from prison" is not too strong. Notice, though, how the escaping philosopher runs in two contrary directions: toward the solid world of green grass and toward the Platonic world of immaterial ideas. For Russell, the central idea is that these two domains are distinct, that the smell of coffee is one thing and geometry another, that their separate integrity, once retrieved from the Hegelian jelly, can be crisply secured. And yet, while the passage emphasizes his euphoria in recovering the body of nature, it was in the other realm—in the Platonic empyrean of logic and mathematics—that Russell dwelt for the next decade.



BERTRAND RUSSELL BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Hegel and Plato, different as they are, shared the central idealist conviction that the physical world can never suffice. Russell broke free of the Hegelian One, but the Platonic Many led him not to many strands of green grass but to many bodiless concepts. In principle, the world may have grown rich, solid, and varied, but in his philosophical practice Russell went in arduous pursuit of invisible and ideal abstractions.

The first fruit of this labor was *The Principles of Mathematics* (1903), and the great flowering tree was *Principia Mathematica* (1910-13). Building on the work of Peano and Frege, Russell undertook to prove that the unruly complexity of mathematics could be resolved into a few logical concepts and axioms. In thousands of pages of manuscript written with Whitehead, he outlined how a large range of mathematical ideas, including number and function, could be analyzed in terms of root logical notions, such as class. The exhausting decade of work brought Russell fame, and it established paradigms of analysis that set the terms for several generations of philosophical labor.

Although Russell always talked of the break with Hegelian idealism as a technical philosophical matter, it seems to have affected the leading of his life as much as the workings of his mind. His early personal aspiration had been guided by the vision of the good life as roundly self-consistent, as "the most perfect harmony." But when idealist unity gave way to a world of many distinct realities, to a pluralist universe where Truth was not single and absolute but where many independent truths make their separate claims, then it must have been easier to recognize what his life was in any case demonstrating: namely, that the self named "Bertrand Russell" was neither consistent nor coherent nor unified, but a congeries of raging energies driving to incompatible ends.

It would be too much to say that a philosophical notion wrecked Russell's marriage; it would be just as plausible to say that the failing marriage led him to a conceptual breakthrough. What matters is that a dream of unity was dashed. Was it really on a bicycle ride through the Cambridge countryside in 1902 that Russell suddenly realized that he didn't love Alys? ("I had no idea until this moment that my love for her was even lessening.") Possibly. But though Russell liked to see his life as a series of sudden revelations ("Great Scott, the ontological argument is sound"), the most moving aspect of the letters is the excruciatingly slow realization of his life's hopeless scatter. He kept a journal during the terrible years 1902-05, and together with these letters, that journal should annihilate the image of Russell as merely brittle and abstract. The mood of suffering is conspicuous, and it is only intensified by the cruelly obvious fact that the suffering of Alys was so plainly worse. They didn't divorce until 1921.

The nightmare of the marriage drove him still more desperately into the embrace of mathematics, and some of the most stirring passages in the letters are words of loyalty to this rival love. "The world of mathematics which you condemn," he writes to one correspondent,

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is really a beautiful world; it has nothing to do with life and death and human sordidness, but is eternal, cold, and passionless. To me, pure mathematics is one of the highest forms of art; it has a sublimity quite special to itself, and an immense dignity derived from the fact that its world is exempt from change and time. I am quite serious in this.... And mathematics is the only thing we know of that is capable of perfection; in thinking about it we become Gods.... I have come to feel a certain shame in thinking of transient things, and to regard a year spent, as this year has been in human sympathy, as something weak and slightly contemptible.

It is one of our century's mythic narratives, this brave and lonely pursuit of the pure form and the exact truth and the precise equation. Einstein was one such hero of exactitude, Russell another. Writing *Principia*, he says, was a "continuous dead heave, involving constantly the maximum effort of which one was capable." He remarked with justice that he would never again be able to think at that pitch of concentration.

But what makes Russell's version of this mythic story something other than a reassuring bedtime tale is that the hero returns from the remote world of high technical precision with no wisdom to impart. "Eternal, cold, and passionless," mathematics has nothing to give to the impure common world. It adds no meaning to a purposeless universe. Russell's willingness to admit this, at least in some of his moods, to see his strenuous labor as entirely without justification—you will find it a scandal or a triumph according to the color of your lights:

> I do not believe the world to be good, I do not believe the universe has a purpose, I think what we value is passing and powerless. And I feel my task of thought just as if it were an order from a superior power—something which *must* be done, without reasoning about it or caring to know why; and I know that it involves the utmost of my powers, a stretching and goading of my intellect which is curiously painful.

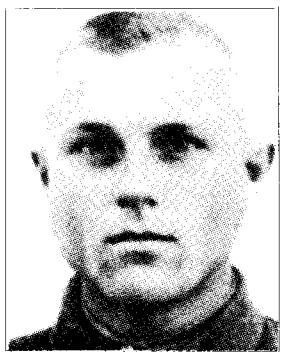
His dedication to philosophy, he goes on, "has nothing to do with reason or with any deliberate judgment that Philosophy is important. It is merely what I *have* to do."

After the "dead heave" of *Principia*, Russell set aside the mental heroics in favor of more worldly concerns, one of which was to campaign vigorously for the Liberal candidate Philip Morrell in the elections of 1910. This brought him into regular contact with Morrell's wife, Ottoline, and then in March 1911 after a dinner at the Morrell's London flat (Philip being away) they found themselves talking in front of the fire until four in the morning, and then ... you know.

The affair with Ottoline Morrell is to the last third of the book what the engagement to Alys Pearsall Smith is to the first: a relentless, claustrophobic study in human need. The seventy-three letters included in this volume exhaust a reader's emotional strength, and it is a sharp shock to be told by the editor that these seventy-three have been culled from more than 1,000 written during the three-and-a-half years. The energy of Russell's love clearly overwhelmed and confused Ottoline, who admired his mind but not his body, and who first parried and then defeated his uncompromising demand that she leave her husband and young daughter.

He wanted everything, she wanted only something. Moreover, as the affair went on, her something became something less. It apparently would have satisfied her to have a fervently intimate friendship with an extraordinary thinker, but for Russell the stakes were infinitely higher. After years in which his ambitions had purified into a longing for mathematical truth, he suddenly returned to that strange animal, his body. It is scarcely too much to say that his senses were restored. His physical surroundings began to matter again; he looked at art with appreciation; and then, and most of all, there was sex.

Presumed Guilty?



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Ottoline later wrote that "his passionate intensity made me feel constrained." No kidding. Russell was body-drunk, body-mad: "A hundredth part of the desire I have would be quite enough." Sometimes he groans with self-contempt—"I hate the prison-house of personal desires"—and sometimes he glories in the splendor: "passion is of God—the unquenchable thirst for heaven—it is the power that drives us on to seek out good." But whether he groans or glories, all evidence suggests that Ottoline preferred the talk to the tickle. Dare one say it? She loved him for his brains.

It is clear, from very early on, that romantic cataclysm was inevitable. Apart from the sex question, there were all the logistics of infidelity: train schedules, trysting points, fear of discovery, spouses still in love. The letters, even just these seventy-three, rise to crescendo, and then to another crescendo beyond. Suffering is here, humiliation, rage, self-abasement. Repeatedly, it seems as if it couldn't go on another day, another hour, but then a new letter comes, and love is saved, and it is stronger than ever, until tomorrow's abyss:

> Please don't think I am hurt or angry or anything like that—I am only dead. It seems to me today that we ought to part for good, because continuing leads straight to the madhouse. Besides a scene of such degradation as yesterday's makes it impossible to stand spiritually upright in a person's presence again.

What makes it possible to read (and to cite) such painful passages is partly the knowledge that the lovers disentangled, survived, lived full lives; and partly the uncanny sense that all this agony was somehow good for Russell, and that he knew it was good, because it saved him from being a "logic-machine." That it was possible to die for love was proof that he was after all alive.

The experience of reading this correspondence is peculiarly intense, balanced as it is between the ferocities of the love for two women—young and not-so-young love. The dates of the volume are 1884-1914, but in fact well over half the letters are concentrated on the tempestuous years of romance, 1893-94 and 1911-14. Compelling though it is, this heavy romantic symmetry is misleading: Russell pours out the rhetoric of desire in these endless yearning missives, but the other half (or is it two-thirds?) of his life—the work life—is badly underrepresented. This is for largely contingent reasons. Russell's colleagues were usually on hand at Cambridge; most of the letters to Whitehead were destroyed by his wife, Evelyn; and if Russell's love-making was closely connected (even confused) with the writing of letters, his philosophy was done alone or in conversation.

No letters to Ludwig Wittgenstein are found in the present volume. If Wittgenstein is not written to, however, he is emphatically written about, the dispersed passages giving moments of great, because involuntary, eloquence. The first reference occurs in a letter to Ottoline Morrell, where Russell mentions "an unknown German," an engineering student with a passion for mathematics, who has traveled to Cambridge to listen to him. For a time Russell is not sure what to think of "my German," but then he comes increasingly to admire and indeed to love him:

> Wittgenstein came and stayed till after 12. We had a close equal passionate discussion of the most difficult point in mathematical philosophy. I think he has *genius*. In discussion with him I put out *all* my force and only just equal his. With all my other pupils I should squash them flat if I did so. He has suggested several new ideas which I think valuable. He is the ideal pupil—he gives passionate admiration with vehement and very intelligent dissent. He spoke with intense feeling about the *beauty* of the big book [*Principia Mathematica*], said he found it like music. That is how I feel it, but few others seem to. Our parting was very affectionate on both sides. He said the happiest hours of his life had been passed in my room. He is not a flatterer, but a man of transparent and absolute sincerity. I have the most perfect intellectual sympathy with him—the same passion and vehemence, the same feeling that one must understand or die, the same sudden jokes breaking down the frightful tension of thought.

Wittgenstein became an insistent, moody, brilliant presence in Russell's life. He would arrive without warning, grapple with fearsomely difficult logical problems, make ruthless personal demands, berate himself and others, sulk and bellow, all while inspired by the beauty of clear thought. When others at Cambridge recognized the genius behind the mask of genius, Wittgenstein became a minor celebrity, and after some secret debate he was invited into the Apostles. But his heavy Germanic seriousness clashed with the bright English wit, and he soon left the group—all the more impressive, then, that for even a brief period he and Russell fought their way into fervent eager intellectual exchange. The tortured Austrian and the aristocratic Briton temporarily surpassed their many differences and entered a "fierce tussle with the combined difficulties of logic and human nerves."

After ten years during which Russell's life had simplified into unhappy marriage and unstinting work, suddenly emotion poured through every crevice. A stormy discussion with Wittgenstein would be followed by a romantic tempest with Ottoline, the one as splendid and as awful as the other. In 1913 it finally struck Russell that the friendship was a mirror image of the romance. In a letter unfortunately absent from Griffin's volume, Russell wrote to Ottoline that

> he affects me just as I affect you—I get to know every turn and twist of the ways in which I irritate and depress you from watching how he irritates and depresses me; and at the same time I love and admire him. Also I affect him just as you affect me when you are cold.... He differs from me just as I differ from you. He is clearer, more creative, more passionate; I am broader, more sympathetic, more sane. I have overstated the parallel for the sake of symmetry, but there is something in it.

Yes, there is. Power, the craving for personal domination, was confessedly large in Russell's disposition—"power is a glorious passion ... the mastery over people's wishes and thoughts and hopes, not merely over their outward acts"—and it is not surprising that he showed himself as humanly most agreeable when the power-lust was defeated and he let himself need. This occured with Ottoline during times of romantic crisis, but then the need became confused with sexual importunity. It is in the early friendship with Wittgenstein, itself fated to decay, that Russell most clearly shows how full acknowledgment of another human being can overcome the will to power: "W. makes me feel it is worthwhile I should exist, because no one else could understand him or make the world understand him." In fact, Russell misunderstood a great deal in Wittgenstein, but that hardly diminishes the grace of his readiness to admire and to give up the pleasures of dominance.

As he comes to realize the extent of Wittgenstein's abilities, Russell re-evaluates his own and abruptly surrenders the idea of carrying the flag of mathematical logic himself. He stares at the thought of never again doing philosophic work of genuinely first-rate importance, and by common agreement this is what happens. He bequeaths the work to the younger man, as the one more capable of exacting thought, and gradually turns his attention to other subjects: to the theory of knowledge, to the study of mind and matter. Then just as Russell's confidence in his philosophic powers is returning, he shows the new project to Wittgenstein, who brutally declares that "it was

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all wrong ... that he had tried my view and knew it wouldn't work." Russell writes that he doesn't understand the objections, "but I feel in my bones that he must be right." He decides that his proposed book has become impossible, at least for many years, and by his own admission he now comes close to suicide.

After this devastating blow, the vital instincts gradually stir again, and he returns to work; but the aura of fragility remains. Humility will never come naturally to Russell, but the encounter with Wittgenstein confirms an ability to turn the hard brilliant light back upon the self and to stare at its unadorned weaknesses. A typically painful self-appraisal leads to a poignant letter of January 1914, where the relationship of master and pupil has been thoroughly reversed:

> Last June I hoped I was doing well, and then Wittgenstein reduced me to despair again. But this time I am sure I have done well. Worry about work colors all one's thoughts and feelings about everything, and takes the joy out of life. I know Wittgenstein will like the work I have done lately.

An early Russell essay begins by asking, "What shall we do with our passions?" and then follows Spinoza in answering that "a passion can only be overcome by a stronger passion." The accumulating effect of these letters is exactly to validate this insight. Russell often saw the root struggle—in himself and in the world—as a conflict between reason and instinct. Fair enough, as long as Russell's reason is itself recognized as a great passion. The coldest mathematics excites his warmest blood. As he well knew, there was no certainty that his emotional turbulence would carry him safely past indignity and disgrace: "All that is good in me comes of reverence, but where I find no occasion for reverence I sink below what you will ever know."

It would be low and paltry to leave Russell hanging there in the balance, as if it were for us to weigh up these first forty-two years and price them by the pound. Better to end with a passage that is not a final truth but a fairly earned last word. He is writing about his hopes as a teacher:

> I try to make people realize that there is a lot to be found out, and that anybody can find it out if they will free their imaginations and live boldly and adventurously; I try to make them feel that thinking is delightful, and that it is not impossible to build up the Cosmos from the very beginning, provided people can forget the authority of parents and guardians and the sages of former times. Reverence for the aims and minds of great men, contempt for their opinions and results, is what I aim at; to make people like them, not imitators of them. Revolution tempered by reverence—do you like that as a watchword?

MICHAEL LEVENSON is professor of English at the University of Virginia.

The Sounds of Silence

BY DAVID J. ROTHMAN

The Mask of Benevolence: Disabling the Deaf Community by Harlan Lane

(Knopf, 310 pp., $23)

Over the past two decades, American attitudes and policies toward people with disabilities have undergone a remarkable revolution. The changes are apparent in public spaces—outside movie theaters and supermarkets, for example, where parking slots are designated for the handicapped, and inside, too, where restrooms have been built to accommodate wheelchair users. The transformation is even more profound in closed-off spaces. Only twenty years ago it seemed permissible in neonatal intensive care units to allow an infant with Down's syndrome to starve to death because its parents, unnerved by the idea of raising a retarded child, refused to permit a simple life-saving operation. Today the physician and the hospital would immediately contact the state child abuse office for permission to override the parental objections and perform the surgery.

The old perspective was based on simple, binary oppositions: normal versus freak, competent versus retarded. The new perspective acknowledges a common humanity. Now we all occupy positions on the same spectrum: the (temporarily) able-bodied are separated from the disabled not by absolutes, but by degrees. In social policy, this perspective has generated a commitment to the principle of "mainstreaming," an insistence on bringing and keeping people with disabilities, no matter how profound, within the community. Advocates of the disabled and their many allies have fiercely and on the whole successfully opposed programs of exclusion (whether they are special institutions for the retarded or special conveyances for the physically handicapped), and implemented strategies for inclusion (getting public schools and public buses to serve, quite literally, everyone). Precisely why this transformation has occurred is still not fully understood. It is certainly not enough to say that the civil rights model was contagious. But it is beyond dispute that we have entered a new era of integration.

Well, almost. For Harlan Lane's provocative and passionate book about the deaf contests many of these propositions. Lane, a psychologist with training in linguistics, is persuaded that the deaf community is subjected to patterns of discrimination that are not merely inconveniencing, but in fundamental ways disabling. Even more important, he is convinced that the most effective way to meet the needs of the deaf is not through mainstreaming, but through exclusive and necessarily segregated programs. He is an avid proponent of state residential schools; arguing against those who wish to do everything possible to keep disabled children at home, Lane wants deaf children removed from their families and sent to special facilities. And he would have medicine, whether in the guise of genetic or bionic engineering, refrain from attempting to eradicate deafness—a truly brazen proposal in a society that is consecrated to the technological fix. Lane is prescribing only for the deaf. He is not suggesting that other disadvantaged groups follow such an unusual path. Still, even on its narrower terms, his book is radical, and it challenges conventional wisdom in a truly original fashion.

The first of Lane's many surprises is his suggestion that deafness is one of the most incapacitating of handicaps, that it is far more severe than, say, blindness in restricting the life chances of those who must cope with it. The handicap is not usually thought of in such bleak terms. The deaf whom most people know are the very elderly, and compared with the various indignities of aging, the loss of hearing seems almost incidental.

But this response is altogether misleading, for it ignores the most critical aspect of the handicap: the devastating

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implications of being born deaf, of *never* having heard sound. The overwhelming majority of those born deaf cannot learn to speak so as to be understood by others, and they have extraordinary difficulty learning to read. For reasons that are only dimly understood, the ability to read is linked to the ability to hear, and while some among the deaf do manage to acquire the skill, it is a heroic achievement that is not widely shared by others. Thus, as Lane observes, those born deaf are likely to be deprived of one of the most fundamental of all human characteristics, the ability to communicate with others.

Unless one reckons with the special gravity of the handicap, Lane's arguments seem unpersuasive, even cranky. But deafness, he insists, is so singular a handicap that it should not be considered a disability at all. (Precise numbers are hard to come by, but we do know that about one out of every 1,000 Americans is "prevocationally deaf," that is, deaf before the age of 18; this works out to more than 200,000 people.) It is a paradoxical formulation. Yet the learning problems that beset those born deaf do not reflect inherent incapacities—deaf is not dumb—but critical delays and errors in when and how language is taught. "The typical deaf child," writes Lane, "is discovered to be deaf at about age 3. By that time ... the critical period [for learning a language] may be over or well advanced, or the nervous system may have made a partially irreversible adaptation to the child's sensory milieu." For those born deaf, with such severe impairments that they cannot hear shouted words, the best, for Lane really the only, route to communication is through sign language. And not the sign language that we see on captioned television, in which gesture substitutes for one or another English word, but American Sign Language (ASL), a manual and visual mode of communication that has its own grammar and structure. It was first introduced by a deaf man from France, Laurent Clerc, in the mid-nineteenth century. Giving a capsule description of ASL is not easy, and Lane's effort only half-succeeds. "ASL is a spatial language," he tells us. "ASL, instead of conveying a spatial array by a linear chain of words, can map that spatial message right onto its surface form."

Debates rage over whether the deaf are best served by signing or by lip reading and being taught to speak (a controversy that was the subject of the popular play and film *Children of a Lesser God*), and over the merits of ASL as against signed English. Lane surveys the literature, exposing the weaknesses in the research supporting mainstreaming, and making as strong a case as possible for his own segregationist position. In the end, however, too much remains unknown to resolve the disputes conclusively.

Lane has no difficulty in establishing the woeful inadequacy of current educational approaches to the deaf. Mainstreaming has not been effective. There are too few deaf children in any one community to give them the attention that they deserve; they sit in the back of the class, ignored and unable to learn. "The average 16-year-old deaf student," Lane notes, "reads as poorly as an 8-year-old hearing child. Even in his best subject, arithmetic, he is four grades behind." As for the efficacy of teaching signed English, fully three-quarters of those who leave deaf schools are unable to read a newspaper, and not surprisingly the overwhelming majority of them (probably 70 percent to 80 percent) cannot obtain skilled jobs. In a society that prizes literacy, not being able to read has disastrous personal and social consequences.

Is ASL the remedy? Over the past two decades, linguists have come to credit it as a language of its own. Its different word order and its substitution of motion for a string of words is no longer viewed as a clumsy and corrupt version of English. But would ASL radically improve the learning capabilities of the deaf? Lane believes that "the systematic denial of their primary manual language shuts out the most effective strategy for teaching them a second language in school." He argues that teaching English as a translation of ASL is likely to work better than teaching English as a first language. Lane's enthusiasm notwithstanding, compelling evidence is in short supply. ASL is still not taught widely to the deaf; the state schools rely upon an unwieldy combination of lip reading, hearing aids, signed English, and some ASL, brought together under the rubric of "total communication," so that powerful demonstrations of its superiority to other techniques are not yet available.

The studies that do exist often fail to differentiate among the several categories of the deaf. A score that aggregates the performances of those born deaf, those who become deaf after 3 years of age, those who have some limited hearing, and those who have none at all is not very informative. Lane cites one recent investigation indicating that deaf children of deaf parents (who seem to have learned ASL) scored better on tests involving the construction of sentences than deaf children of hearing parents (who had not learned ASL). But he candidly notes that such an outcome might reflect not so much the power of ASL as the special relationship between deaf parents and deaf children, or the heightened expectations that deaf parents have for their children.

In the absence of conclusive data, Lane resorts to a number of not altogether satisfying strategies of argument. He downplays the significance of research to the framing of social policy, observing, altogether fairly, that no one required "proof before endorsing total communication, nor did they ask for proof before embracing mainstreaming." Why should ASL be held to a higher standard? Then, presuming with good reason that ideology often substitutes for data in determining the direction of social policy, Lane doggedly sets out to give ASL an appealing ideological base. He links the cause of the deaf to the cause of other language minorities and other minorities more generally. The effort turns out to be exceptionally heavy-handed and exasperating.

Lane's initial formulation is that the deaf are a "linguistic and cultural minority with a rich and unique heritage," like Hispanic Americans. So all those committed to bilingual education and a curriculum that teaches more than the dominant values of white middle-class men should embrace the cause of the deaf in their platforms. Lane next identifies the struggle of the deaf against their oppressors (of whom more later) as a struggle for "self-determination." So all those who oppose colonialism in any of its guises should include the deaf among the colonized people. To embellish these arguments, Lane frequently invokes the authority of those who have championed the oppressed—Fanon, for example, and of course Foucault. Eager to make the potential alliance as broad as possible, Lane goes so far as to warn that "if members of the deaf community can be declared defective and treated accordingly, it is that much easier to do the same to African Americans, gays, Jews. Perhaps the reader himself or herself runs a risk."

By the time his roster is completed, however, the reader is not so much dazzled as dazed. Are the deaf really like Hispanics or Jews, when Lane himself tells us that the overwhelming majority of deaf children are born to hearing parents? And are the deaf actually a colonial people, commanding a resource that developed countries are anxious to exploit?

This last issue is particularly impor-

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tant to Lane, and his most scathing indictments are reserved for those who now dominate the training and the education of the deaf. He calls this group the "audist establishment." Composed of school administrators, counselors, teachers, interpreters, physicians, psychologists, psychiatrists, speech therapists, hearing aid specialists, and social workers, they make their living from the deaf, promoting their own economic and psychological interests in the process. They hold key editorial positions in the scholarly journals, referee the grant applications to the National Institutes of Health, sit on the panels that the Food and Drug Administration assembles to judge the efficacy of proposed interventions.

"Behind the mask of benevolence," asserts Lane, "is the professional engaged in the human-services market, staking out his particular claim in the fastest-growing sector of our economy." At stake is a $2 billion market, sustained by such claims as every deaf child has a right to a hearing aid, even though almost half of the 80,000 deaf children in school cannot hear and understand any speech at all. Where financial self-interest leaves off, psychological rewards and personal convenience step in. Just as white doctors in colonial Africa infantilized the native, and thereby justified their own paternalism and supercilious attitudes, so audists demean the deaf and expand their own prerogatives. Dismissing ASL as a collection of arbitrary gestures, they would no more learn this language than colonizing powers would learn native tongues. From their self-serving perspective, it is for the deaf to master English, not for hearing people to master signing.

But for all the efforts of audists to deprive the deaf of autonomy and dignity, Lane reports that a politicized group among the deaf is now asserting itself and, against great odds, achieving notable victories. The uprising of the students at Gallaudet University in 1991, successfully protesting the appointment of a hearing president to lead the country's leading institution of higher learning for the deaf, is the best-known and most celebrated example. For the first time, the deaf captured the kind of attention and support that other protest groups have enjoyed.

Moreover, behind the newspaper headlines there are major cultural accomplishments that are giving the deaf a positive self-image, a sense of self as other than disabled. The deaf community has its heroes, cultural and political; it has its own advocates and educational leaders, its actors and playwrights. There is an emerging history of the deaf (Jack Gannon's *Deaf Heritage* and Lane's own *When the Mind Hears*); a new sensitivity to the deaf experience (Carol Padden and Tom Humphries's *Deaf in America*); an emerging poetry of the deaf (in ASL); and an expanding curriculum for deaf studies. And underlying all of this production, Lane informs us, is a sociological reality, a group identity forged around the fact that the deaf communicate most effectively with each other. Unlike the blind, for example, who tend to marry sighted people, the deaf marry the deaf. And deaf parents have been known to cheer when their babies are born deaf.

What is at stake in the confrontation between the deaf community and the audist establishment is not merely a dispute about who should preside over a deaf university or whether a college curriculum should include deaf studies, but something far more momentous. If the deaf truly constitute a community, with its own heritage and language, then everything must be done to enhance its integrity and its solidarity. If deafness is a handicap but not a disability, if it is the equivalent of being Hispanic or Afro-American, then mainstreaming loses much of its relevance, and ASL becomes, along with residential schools, the vital means for sustaining a culture.

As a matter of logic, then, hearing parents should give their deaf children over to these institutions. Otherwise they are depriving them of membership in their rightful community. Indeed, if the deaf constitute a community, then do efforts to eradicate it, either through technological or genetic engineering, become the moral equivalents of genocide? One would no more want a procedure that would make all black fetuses white than one that would make all deaf fetuses hearing. This is what it really means, Lane tells us, to respect the autonomy of the deaf: not a condescending admiration or the provision of helpful services (like having someone sign speech), but a recognition, in every sense, that the deaf are a whole, not a damaged, people.

Ought we to shape public policy around the premise that the deaf are a linguistic minority, just like Hispanics? Lane fervently says yes—too fervently. He is so committed to his proposition that he is unable to give both sides their due, to bring us into the full complexity of the issues and persuade that he is right. In the end, his book is essentially a brilliant polemic.

The thinness of Lane's analysis is apparent in his treatment of institutionalization. Perhaps he is right that hearing parents should quickly dispatch their children to residential schools: there may be no other way for them to learn to communicate, and to assume a pride of self. But if that is the case, then surely we must acknowledge the anguish that they will endure, and recognize the pain of giving a child over to an institution, and ponder the limits of what love can accomplish without communication, and worry whether teachers and caretakers can compensate for parental attachment.

And, not least, remember just how grim is the history of state institutions. That history shows a 150-year record of failure in the training of dependent and delinquent youth in state reformatories, in the treatment of mental illness in state hospitals, and in the care of mental retardation in state schools. Why should the experience of the deaf be any different? Well into the 1960s, parents of retarded children were counseled to institutionalize their children on the grounds that only special institutions could keep them alive and teach them skills; and that advice continued to be dispensed even as the institutions became so overcrowded and so understaffed that the children lay naked, two or three to a crib or pen, soaked with urine and covered with excrement.

Lane's unwillingness to consider this ghastly heritage is all the more surprising because he is not impressed with most of the existing state schools for the deaf, disturbed not by their inhumanity but by their pedagogical backwardness. He is aware, moreover, that the percentage of children born deaf in black and other minority families seems to be increasing, so at the least he must ask whether institutions that mainly serve children of color will be decently funded or adequately staffed. And how are these facilities to recruit and to retain competent and sensitive caretak-

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ers and teachers? What will prevent them from being co-opted by the audist establishment, or following down the same path of calculated self-interest?

Lane should also ponder the possible consequences of sequestering a minority. Typically, to segregate is to stigmatize. Out of sight becomes out of mind, so that funding for the state schools, never overly generous, may become even more restricted. Segregation may also have the unintended consequence of homogenizing the classrooms and the streets, producing even less tolerance for differences among people. Communities seem less likely to respect a culture that becomes less visible. And for the deaf themselves, early segregation would not seem the best strategy. For all his separatist talk, Lane anticipates that as adults, the deaf will want to make their way in the hearing world.

Lane similarly fails to examine central questions raised by his rejection of proposed technological interventions for deafness. He spends many pages denouncing the use of cochlear implants—a mechanism that must be surgically inserted, through a very invasive procedure, into the inner ear, and that will purportedly improve the hearing of the deaf. He may well be right that the evidence for the success of cochlear implants among those born deaf is flimsy, and that its proponents are either insensitive to the character of the deaf community or driven by economic greed. Still, he must at least present the counterarguments that were found to be convincing by an FDA panel that approved the device in 1990.

Let us imagine the day that an embryo can be examined for genetic abnormalities and the gene carrying deafness can be identified and replaced. Would we allow a parent to make use of the technology? Would we require a parent to make use of it? Would we insist that those who refrain from correcting the handicap pledge to cover all the extra costs of education? One can empathize with deaf parents who cheer when their baby is born deaf, but are we not obliged to weigh the benefits and the harms to the child? What does it mean to be hearing in a deaf family as opposed to deaf in a hearing society?

Obviously there are no quick or simple answers, but these are questions that must be addressed, even at the price of putting advocacy aside. As I pondered these intricate issues, indebted to Lane for raising them even as I was disappointed in him for not going further in resolving them, I took the occasion to have a second look at Frederick Wiseman's documentary on the deaf, filmed at the Alabama State School for the Deaf. It was produced in standard Wiseman fashion: no voice-over, no commentary, just the sights and sounds of a facility for the deaf. And it was painful to watch, much more painful than I remembered.

The first time I saw the film, before I had read Lane, I missed all the nuances of educating the deaf. I did not focus on the fact that all the children wore large hearing aids; I thought it was simply a good idea to use the technology. And I certainly was not put off by watching the teachers simultaneously speak and sign and use their hands to shape the mouths of the children so they might utter more discernible sounds. But seeing the film again, after Lane, was a vastly different experience. Now I was forced to wonder whether the equipment was doing anyone any good (were the hearing losses so severe as to be beyond mechanical improvement?), and why the speech of most of the children was unintelligible. After Lane, I had to ask whether the teachers' persistent use of spoken language (even when the child was not looking at them) was a teaching tool or a reflexive habit. Were they aware that many of these children could not hear a thing?

I sat there disheartened by what I saw, and appreciated Lane's skills in making vivid to us what it means to be unable to communicate and make oneself understood. I felt sympathy with his passion to give the deaf a language and an integrity; his book's hard edge is owed in part to the frustrations that he and others have encountered in achieving these worthy ends. And yet I could not but recall the mischief that can result from substituting ideology for data, from arguing by metaphor and misplaced analogy. Lane has his eye on a promised land. He invokes not medicine but anthropology, not experts in infirmities but experts in culture. But he omits history, which means that he leaves us with the nagging thought that we have been to his promised land before, and found it wanting.

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Walking the Line

BY EDWARD HIRSCH

A Dream of Mind by C. K. Williams

(Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 100 pp., $16)

C. K. Williams is a poet of disquietudes, of the mind aggressively questioning and requestioning its own workings, brooding upon the fluctuating data of consciousness, quarreling with itself. No other contemporary poet, except perhaps John Ashbery, has given us a more textured or pressurized rendering of what it feels like to think—to try to think—through a situational or mental problem moment by moment: to bring the unconscious into the available light of language, to anatomize the psyche with a continual tally of internal and external evidence.

Behind the acute, painstaking self-consciousness of this work there is a sense that the burden of poetry is to discover the darkest inner truth, to confront the secret that can no longer be sublimated, that forces itself to be known. "The return of the repressed," Williams names it in his poem "Child Psychology," and the phrase reverberates throughout the rest of his new book. In A *Dream of Mind* he has taken his candid and inclusive poetry of agonistic consciousness even further in the direction of interiority and discursiveness, as if literalizing the dictum of the baroque Jesuit poet Tommaso Ceva that poetry is "a dream dreamed in the presence of reason."

Williams has always been a poet of psychological extremes, the sorrows of a diligent, self-reflexive consciousness his initiating subject. In his first two books, *Lies* (1969) and *I Am the Bitter Name* (1971), however, he was less interested in exploring linkages and associations, the mind's obsessive thirst for connection, than in tracking what he has called "varieties of disjunctive consciousness." His early work, influenced by Artaud and Vallejo, inten-

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tionally subverted logical connectives and struggled to enact the movement of the mind as it swoops, hovers, and starts in at least three different directions at once.

Unsparingly honest and violently self-divided ("I am going to rip myself down the middle into two pieces," he wrote in "Halves"), his poems were also motivated by a furious political consciousness, almost breaking apart with frustration and rage over the outright lies of the social and political world. Some rail against a perversely absent God ("A Day for Anne Frank," "The Next to the Last Poem about God"); others storm against government ("A Poem for the Governments," "Another Dollar"). The furies peak in "In the Heart of the Beast," a long unpunctuated poem that responded to May 1970 (Cambodia, Kent State, Jackson State) at the level of a howl. These single-minded assaults shouldn't be dismissed; they were biographically and historically necessary. Still, in retrospect Williams's poetry seems hampered by the protest mode, the uncapitalized directness ("this is fresh meat right mr. nixon?") of the late '60s.

Throughout his new book, Williams uses with great effectiveness the flexible, rangy, and capacious long line that he first discovered in *With Ignorance* (1977), refined in *Tar* (1983), and adapted to a group of eight-line poems in *Flesh and Blood* (1987). If emotion, for the lyric poet, is necessarily predicated on technique, then the decisive moment in Williams's development was when he began to enlarge and to extend his lineation even further than Whitman's free verse line, to see how far he could push and shape that line before it faltered or became prose. By using the line as the largest possible rhythmic unit, he forced himself to put things into his poems rather than to leave them out, to break the abbreviated rhetorical code—the lyric shorthand for emotion—that seems to characterize so much of the poetry of any period. As if heeding Frost's directive to dramatize, Williams also became an insistent storyteller, burying his social message deeper in the substance and the political unconscious of his poems.

The fourteen poems in *With Ignorance* have a powerful narrative propulsion and velocity. They are raw, colloquial, outsized. Here was a starkly confessional, democratic, ambitious lyric poet who had crossed William Carlos Williams and Robert Lowell with Dostoevsky, whose poems had a streetwise urban intelligence—

> If you put in enough hours in bars, sooner or later you get to hear every imaginable kind of bullshit. ("Bob")

a canny psychological sense of other people—

> I think most people are relieved the first time they actually know someone who goes crazy. ("The Cave")

and an outlandish, almost biblical sense of outrage—

> It stinks. It stinks and it stinks and it stinks and it stinks. ("Hog Heaven")

One is keyed to the underlying existential quest and paradoxical nature of Williams's enterprise by the quotation from Kierkegaard that gives the book its title: "With ignorance begins a knowledge the first characteristic of which is ignorance." There is a tremendous amount of social information in Williams's work, but it is animated and subsumed by the hungers of consciousness repeatedly circling back and striving to know itself.

In *Tar*, Williams refined his storytelling gift and perfected the long line he had invented in *With Ignorance*, transforming it into a more sinuous and symmetrical unit, an instrument for speeding up or slowing down narrative, for modulating, correcting, and intensifying thought. His music can be as supple as a needle pulling thread or as pounding as a hammer coming down on metal. Copiousness of detail, a commanding narrative scope and energy, and an unremitting psychological intensity characterize such poems as "From My Window," "My Mother's Lips," "On Learning of a Friend's Illness," and "Combat." These poems not only tell dramatic stories—seeing two Vietnam vets, one in a wheelchair, careening haphazardly down the street; remembering his mother mouthing his words even as he spoke them—but they also think critically about those stories, doggedly pursuing human motivation, implicating and convicting the self as both actor and narrator, transfiguring the anecdotal into the mythical and archetypal. Perhaps most telling for Williams's new work is the concluding twenty-five-part poem, "One of the Muses." This highly abstract, nonnarrative poem evokes and traces his tormenting struggle to conceptualize and to bring into language a presence who at one time visited him, an evasive, nameless, bodiless spirit, possibly an inner construction, an almost palpable figure, a Platonic muse, a dream of mind.

The 130 poems of *Flesh and Blood* have the feeling of a contemporary sonnet sequence. Like Berryman's *Dream Songs* or Lowell's *Notebooks*, Williams's long-lined short poems are shapely and yet open-ended and self-generative, loosely improvisational though with an underlying formal necessity. Many present single extended moments intently observed: a girl with an artificial hand stepping onto the subway, a bum scribbling in a battered notebook in the public library. Others are miniature short stories, sudden fictions. Still others take meditative stabs at ideas of "nostalgia" or "the past" or "failure." All of these poems present people in situations in which they are vulnerable, exposed, on the edge.

The poems in *Flesh and Blood* have a thick naturalistic surface and a fast narrative current. But a philosopher lurks behind the sociologist. The poems in the second section, for example, are structured as urban parables. They take a general idea—"reading" or "love" or "the good mother"—and yoke it to a specific story: a man fixing his car in bitter cold stops to read a newspaper or a bored couple "perversely" persist in kissing each other. In these poems, the general is exemplified by the particular and the individual vignette aspires to the exemplum. In the eighteen-part elegy that concludes the book, Williams not only eulogizes his friend Paul Zweig but also charts the contours of consciousness as it tries to hold onto a friend even as it must let him go.

Dream of Mind is Williams's most varied and challenging work so far. It, too, is about "thinking thought," though it is also about the ways in which thought—or, more precisely, dream—thinks us, how a complex of unconscious desires, fantasies, and projections stream through and motivate our actions. One recurrent subject of this five-part book is how the psyche constitutes and reconstitutes itself—beset by a steady stream of impressions and mental images, obsessed by the wounds and fissures of memory, the tormenting routes of self-consciousness, the continual gap and flow we experience between our conceptions of ourselves and what we actually see and experience in the world. An old man badgers his family to help him commit suicide, but then asks not to be told when ("When"); the poet recalls the traumatic project of remaking himself as a writer during his 20s ("She, Though"); an aged Paris broods upon the dying Helen of Troy ("Helen"): the poems in this vol-

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ume remind us how hard it is to remain one person, how painful it is to see ourselves and others clearly, how radically unstable and uncertain is our knowing.

Williams's poems are nothing if not extreme. Relentless, urban, invasive—like city life itself, they are not for the faint-hearted. One of his characteristic strategies is to dramatize the turbulence of the mind at work under terrific duress; that is, in the presence of others at moments of their greatest social weakness and vulnerability, moments when the fabric of daily life is torn open and someone is profoundly exposed. The speaker is an inadvertent voyeur—self-conscious, self-critical—who sees something suppressed or forbidden, often something offensive. He discovers another person simultaneously observing what he observes, ascertaining what he is avoiding or avoiding what he is compelled to acknowledge, and thereby sees his own reactions in an obverse mirror. He catches himself looking, looking away, knowing. Many of the poems are structured precisely around this process of perception, resistance and denial, and recognition.

The poem "Harm," for example, recounts the memory of a local homeless person—familiar, usually inoffensive—who recently "stepped abruptly out between parked cars, / undid his pants, and, not even bothering to squat, sputtered out a noxious, almost liquid stream." It is not only that the speaker must stare at the man's bony shanks, stained buttocks, and scarlet, diseased testicles, but also

> that a slender adolescent girl
> from down the block happened by right then, and looked,
> and looked away, and looked at me, and looked away again, and made me want to say to her,
>
> because I imagined what she must have felt, It's not like this, really, it's not this,
> but she was gone, so I could think, But isn't it like this, isn't this just what it is?

The burden of this poem is the knowledge of the soiled and sordid, the comprehension that cannot be evaded, rationalized, or denied.

One hears in these poems the inner voice of the mind not only lacerating itself but also coming up against the blunt reality of other people. Thus, in the emblematic encounter "Child Psychology," the repressed returns in the form of a worker who had been mucking about in the sewer—"those viscous, unforgiving depths"—and fished out some keys that the speaker very much wanted to forget losing. The agent of his self-knowledge has arrived, his punishment postponed but now swift and inexorable. In such ways other people often become the external correlative for a demonic internal force, embodying the shunned or refused self. "No wonder my fascination turned to those as lost as me, the drugged, the drunk, the mad," the poet writes in "The Loneliness": "Like ancient wounds they were, punctured with their solitude and sorrow, suppurating, stinking; / I'd recoil from what the soul could come to, but I knew within my soul that they were me."

A *Dream of Mind* is dominated by two complementary long poems. The fourteen-part sequence "Some of the Forms of Jealousy" both dramatizes and investigates the form of consciousness obsessed by sexual betrayal. In a series of vignettes and meditations the poet painstakingly recreates the degrading miseries of jealousy, the cells of doubt that expand into full-fledged torments, the unrelenting anxiety that inevitably involves and implicates others, the "terrific agitation" and "scalding focus," the "desperate single-mindedness" and "odious dependency" that takes over the jealous mind. "This is so exhausting: when will it relent?" the speaker asks in "The Silence," and immediately answers his own question: "It seems never, not as long as consciousness exists." Obsessive jealousy is consciousness run amok, the mind humiliating and annihilating itself, not knowing that "what we're living isn't ever what we think we are."

The sequence "A Dream of Mind" also takes up the subject of "the mind in its endless war with itself," but here it becomes an idea of poetic method, a struggle to illuminate the themes of being by clarifying various tremulous epistemological states, to solidify the fluidity of a self that at times seems no more than a field of interchanges. There is a nearly endless regress as the dreamer tries to know himself ("Always in the dream I seemed conscious of myself having the dream even as I dreamed it"), and the poet vigilantly tries to transcribe and shape the unconscious wave passing through him ("It almost seems that this is what dream is about, to think what's happening as it's happening"). "A Dream of Mind" is Williams at his most complex, abstract, and discursive, the poet "deciphering and encoding," thinking through and being thought.

"Poetry confronts in the most clear-eyed way just those emotions which consciousness wishes to slide by," Williams wrote in his essay "Poetry and Consciousness," and in *A Dream of Mind* he has voraciously struggled to clarify that sliding, to unmask what is most painful and hidden in our psyches, and to embody that unmasking in the processes of lyric.

EDWARD HIRSCH is the author most recently of *The Night Parade* (Knopf).

Son

He sent this key from Florida,
I think. A key to what?
I tried the car, the trucks,
tried every door—nothing fit.
My wife thought it was his idea
of a joke. I never got his jokes.

Not a word from him, just things:
a blank postcard from Colorado Springs;
a snapshot of himself from Aspen,
arm in arm with somebody but
both faces had been scissored out.
A sign above the bar said SHIT HAPPENS.

Eugene, Spokane . . . He'd telephone,
collect, and I knew it was him,
though he always used a different name.
At times enough to make you laugh:
Call from Hans, Ricardo, Jeff,
will you accept? Yes. Dial tone.

Yes, shit happens, and we pay
for it. How many years
I've relived our disasters,
over and over, the final scene
distant and tinny, like a TV screen . . . .
I can still feel the sway

of lights, hear the bark
and cough of the trooper's radio.
He looked around, tipped his hat back,
whistled. "Friend, what I would do,
I'd get me a court order, number one.
I'd call a locksmith." My own son.

Look at the blue above those hills:
this country takes my breath away.
I own the land out to those hills
and more, good land, the purest air
south of Canada. When nights are clear
we get Chicago, Baton Rouge, L.A.

DANIEL HALL

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CAPE COD DIARIST

Shi'a madness

MAYBE IT WASN'T THE FIRST REFERence in the American press. But this is a war that has gone largely unnoticed, even by those who, like me, are obsessed with such matters. Writing about Saddam Hussein's continued bellicosity in a *New York Times* article, Patrick Tyler alludes to Iraqi air force strikes this summer on Shiite Muslims in the southern part of the country. But the bombing may not be the worst of it. Baghdad has mounted a sustained campaign against the demography and ecology of Iraq from Basra southward, aimed at eradicating the local Shiites by poisoning their fish, diverting their waters, and otherwise raining death from artillery and fixed-wing aircraft. The assault on life in the marshes means the end of a culture you can see already on Sumerian reliefs from the Early Bronze Age. It ranks with the destruction of the Kurds, the Bosnians, and the ethnic Burmans in our world's current ethnic atrocities. And it takes place in a region that the West recently subdued by a massive show of military force. So why do we hardly know about it? Or care?

THERE IS THE EXCUSE OF IGNOrance in the West because it is hard to get journalists into southern Iraq. But journalists have a way of getting where they want to, and this is simply a place they don't want to be. The very word "Shiite" is alienating. It resonates to the perfervid hordes of Tehran during the reign of the Ayatollah. But, as the *Independent* of London put it on May 16, "It is doubtful if the Iraqi Shiites are as inspired by religious fanaticism as their leaders hope or the middle classes of Baghdad fear." But even if the Shiites of southern Iraq *were* religious zealots, would this make their eradication any more palatable? Barbara Stapleton, writing in the *Independent* on July 6 from a refugee camp in Iran, reports horrifying tales that amount to ecocide and attempted genocide. Saddam's engineers are now trying to drain the marshes, in order to exterminate this particular population. If they succeed, Saddam's army will quite literally have a field day, a human turkey shoot in the open.

THE DAILY HUMILIATION OF NEGOtiating with Saddam over the precise details of U.N. inspection is entirely due to the fact that we essentially lost the war Mr. Bush proudly boasts he won. We are also learning, day by day, the extent to which Bush and James Baker colluded against their own government and its laws in bolstering the Ba'ath dictatorship virtually until the Iraqi crossing into Kuwait. It was not, it turned out, the relentless persecution of the Shiites and Kurds that made Saddam Hitler in Bush's eyes, but Saddam's coveting of the oil wealth of Bush's other pal, the emir of Kuwait. And now Bush has been saved from having to decide whether to bomb Baghdad again. All that Iraq had to agree to, however, was to admit U.N. inspectors to the Agriculture Ministry—and even then Saddam's bureaucrats were able to pick and choose which inspectors were allowed in. The regime did not have to stop slaughtering Shiites and Kurds. And Saddam is still violating the terms of his own agreement with the Security Council, as he has for nearly a year and a half. So there's always an excuse for Operation Desert Storm, Part II. But the real reason would be to give the president's hapless re-election campaign a lift. It is not James Baker's function to rescue Kurds or Shiites. His function is to rescue George Bush.

THE REPUBLICANS ARE DESPERATE, and particularly desperate about Al Gore. Which is why Dan Quayle's future seems so dicey just now. And also why the GOP's chosen rottweiler, Senator Robert Dole, was dispatched to savage Gore on *his* Iraq record—despite the fact that the Tennessean was one of only ten senatorial Democrats to break with his party during the Gulf crisis and that he won the enmity of Senator George Mitchell for his independence in the process. Dole has now accused Gore of putting his Gulf war vote out for bid, with the alleged currency of exchange being a slot in prime time during the debate. Dole specializes in the cheap and vicious, so this should be no surprise. It's also not surprising that he goes around questioning the bona fides of others on Iraq: he has much to answer for himself. A few months before the Iraqi invasion, Dole led a delegation of senators (including Alan Simpson and Howard Metzenbaum) on pilgrimage to Saddam. In Baghdad Dole was Glaspie-like in his obsequiousness. Once home, he successfully held routine legislation hostage to unencumbered trade with Iraq, the very trade with which Saddam built its war machine. But Dole was not only doing Saddam's bidding in this matter of sanctions; he was also doing Bush's.

FOR NEARLY A DECADE THE ARABS could safely rely on Yitzhak Shamir to put Israel at odds with its friends. Now the other Yitzhak is back, and with him, altogether more reasonable attitudes about what constitutes security for the Jewish state. Already Rabin has shown that he doesn't believe the Jews must actually inhabit every piece of land God promised them. This is the real ideological concession that Labor's victory entails. But Rabin is also a hard-headed liberal, which means he understands there can be no peace without safety, and that safety is defined not by some epiphanous happening among the Arabs about their relationship to Zionism but by Israel's objective strategic circumstances. Are the Arabs prepared to live with these post-1967 strategic circumstances? My guess is that they are not. With Rabin in power, however, their rejectionism will not be costless. Which is the real reason they are hoping George Bush is still in power on January 20, 1993.

SYRIA RECEIVED FOR ITS SYMBOLIC participation in the Gulf war—Lebanon. Now James Baker is trying to disguise this fact by persuading Hafez Assad to at least redeploy his troops from Beirut to the Bekaa valley, out of the sight of journalists. The secretary won't succeed. In fact, right after his visit to Lebanon, government soldiers moved against a Christian militia while Syrian forces watched approvingly. Egypt's reward for joining the same war in the same insubstantial way was (aside from forgiveness of $7 billion in American loans) having an Egyptian national, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, elected secretary general of the U.N. A Coptic Christian married to someone born a Jew—thus he is seen as a tolerant man—he is a vestige of the Nasser era. His vernacular still evokes the tired tropes of Bandung: non-alignment, north-south, Third World, etc. His election was somehow seen as a sign of life in the decrepit old U.N. It wasn't. Last week the secretary general objected to the fixation of the Security Council on the struggle over Bosnia. "The war of the rich," he churlishly called it. Boutros-Ghali wanted comparable attention paid to the unfolding tragedy in Somalia. And why not? Shouldn't the U.N. be allowed to fail equally in Africa as in Europe?

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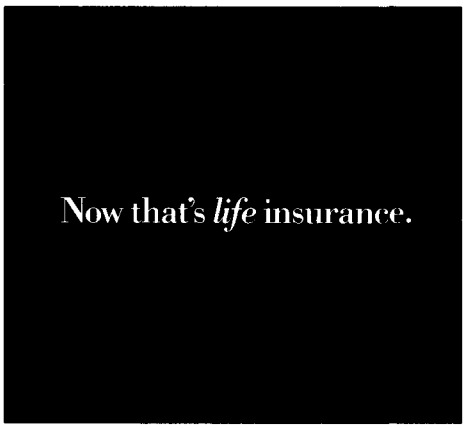

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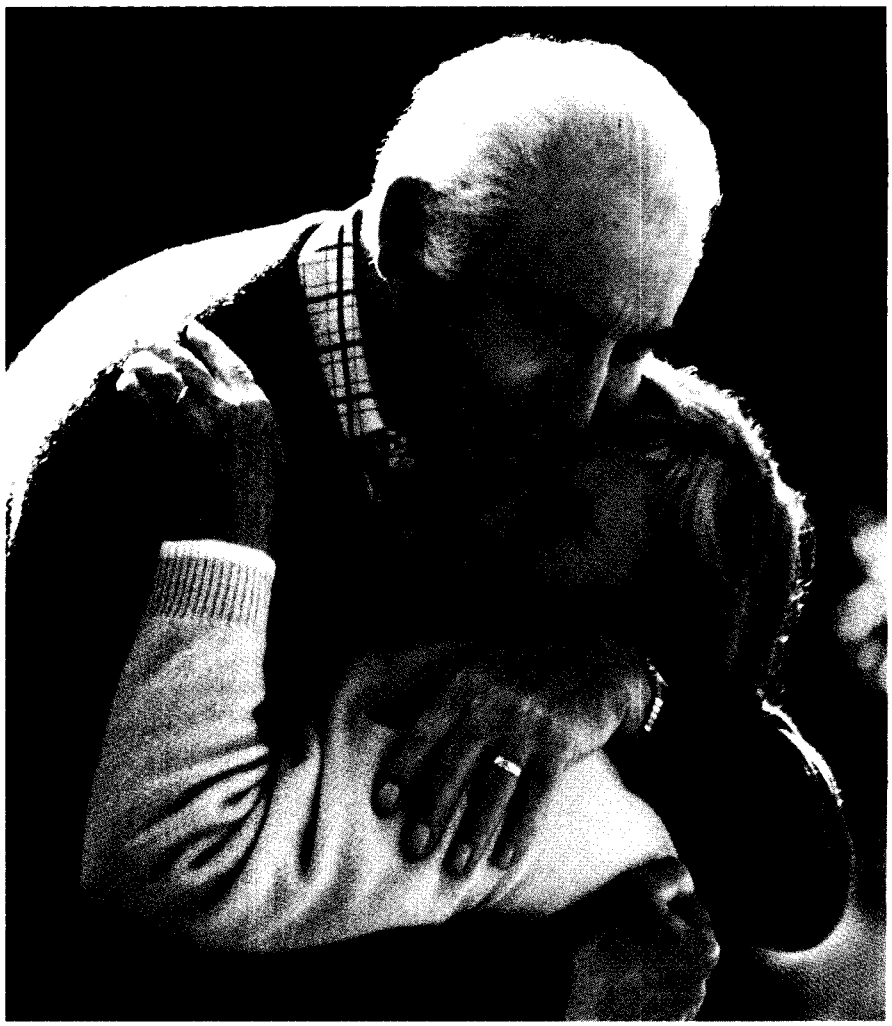

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